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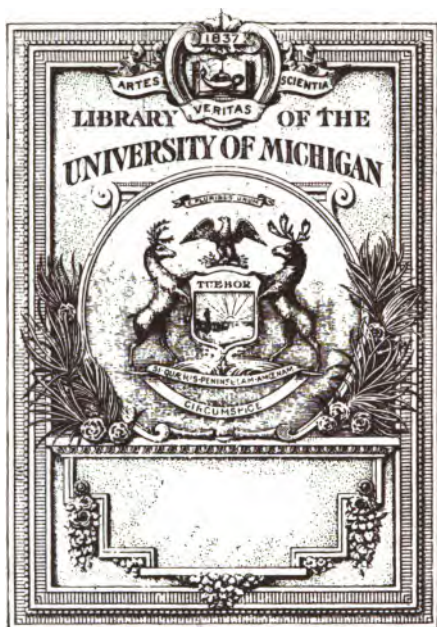
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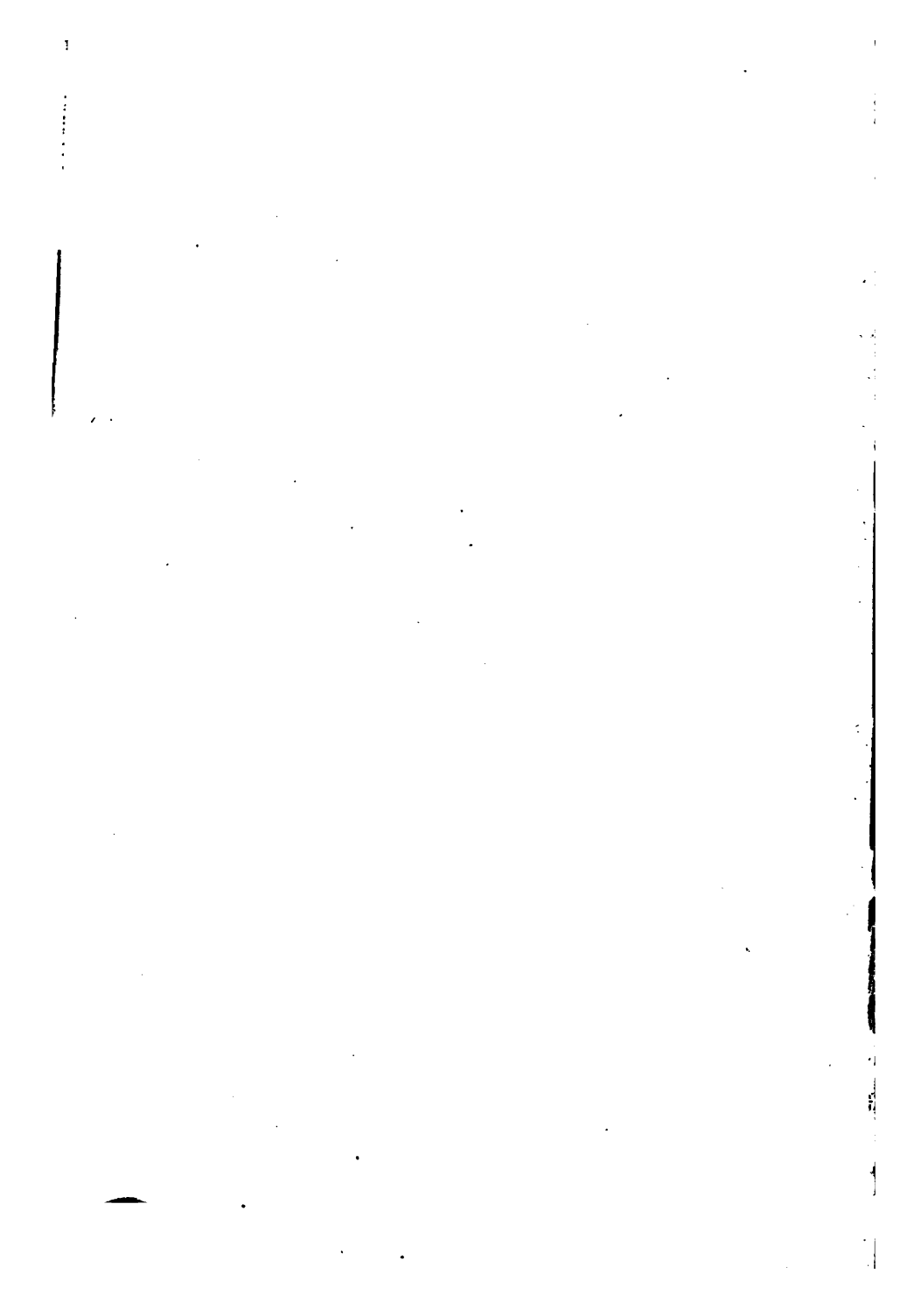
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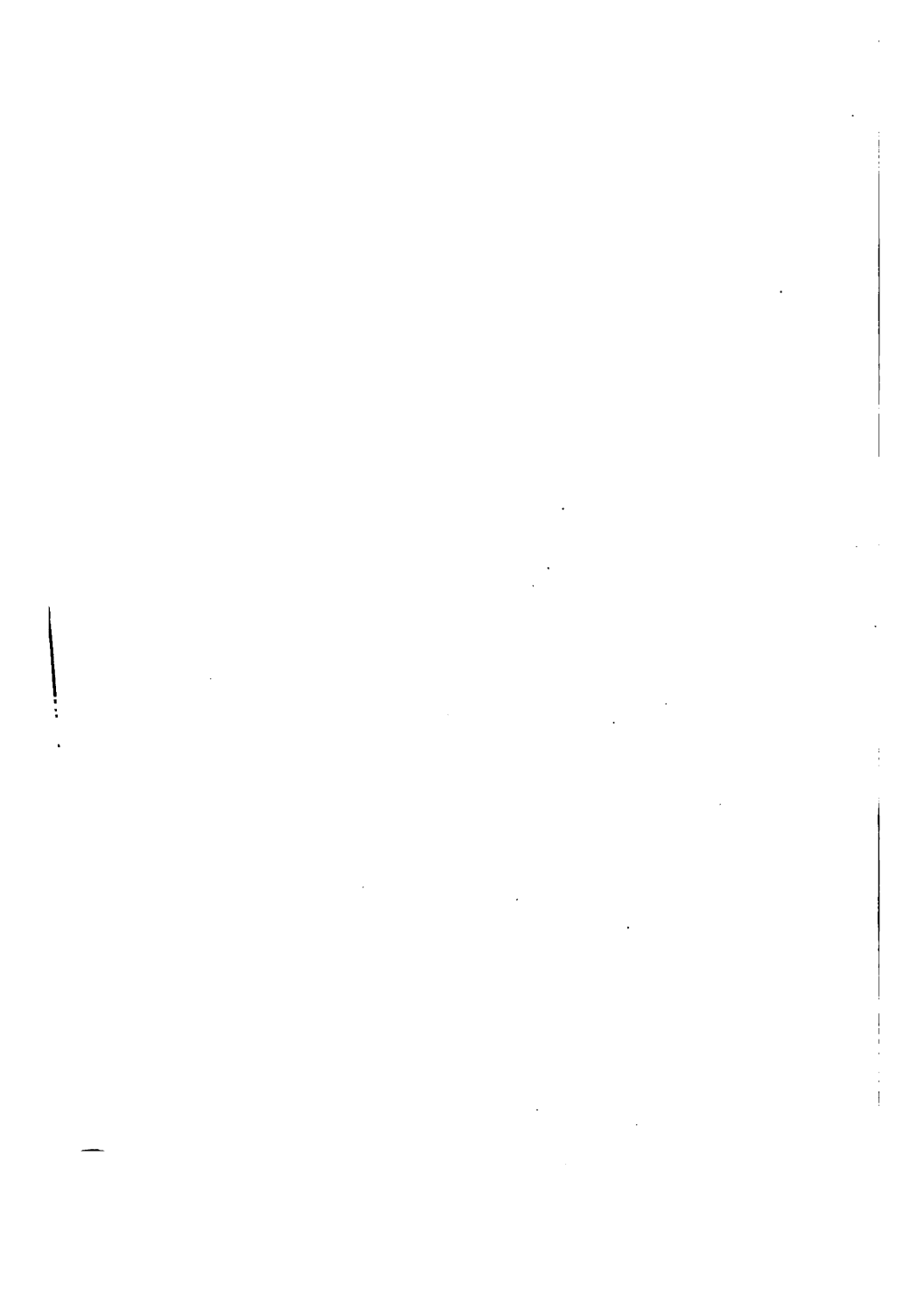


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FROM A VILLAGE PULPIT



FROM A VILLAGE PULPIT



BY THE
REV. GEORGE WHITEFIELD FISHER



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THE REASON FOR THIS BOOK

GEORGE WHITEFIELD FISHER was born on Christmas Day in the year 1831. His Christian ministry lasted nearly twenty years, and was divided among three parishes: Saugerties on the Hudson; Peace Dale, Rhode Island (where he remained twelve years); and Cameron, Missouri, where, after a ministry of only a year, his health failed. He returned East in the hope of recovery; but, after a brief illness, his life in this world was finished, July 12, 1884.

His body was laid to rest in Peace Dale.

These few messages, gathered from his ministry, have been compiled for his children and grandchildren, that they may have with them always a clear view of the earnest, consecrated spirit which prompted and pervaded his life-work. Many of his parishioners, too, who are now alive and hold him in grateful remembrance, will be glad to have a memento of his enlightened and broad ministry—a ministry, exalted and poetic, yet keeping his people in touch with the live issues and growing knowledge of the times, and holding them, as well, to the homely virtues and obligations of our daily life.

His own was a Christian and a manly life—true and gentle, but also courageous and full of purpose and activity; and, in its daily walk, exemplifying

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the lessons he taught and the motives and aspirations he sought to inspire. When the supreme moment came, the hope he had preached to others did not fail him.

Those who knew him loved him, and now cherish his memory with reverence.

A little of all this (for not all of a sweet and brave life can write itself down) is revealed in these sermons. Wherever they chance to come, may they awaken a sense of the beauty of holiness, and create the desire to be taught of Christ and to live the Christ-life.

ELLA WESCOTT FISHER.

I

A HANDFUL OF CORN

"There shall be a handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains,—the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon."—PSALM lxxii. 16.

IN the text, under the figure of a handful of seed-corn planted upon sunny uplands, resulting in an extensive and an abounding harvest, waving like a forest, the poetic imagination may depict the small beginnings in the planting of Christianity and the large results to be gathered from it.

Christ came into the world, the child of poverty and obscurity. His early life was passed,—the period of His preparation,—in a despised backwoods village in a remote mountain valley among the lower and outlying ridges of the Lebanon range, to which reference is made in the text. When he began His work it must needs be among the humbler classes, and the outcast and the criminal. His first chosen helpers were, from a similar necessity, rough and unlettered fishermen. The very nation to which He belonged had earned the ill-will of the neighbouring peoples, and were excluded from the sympathies of the whole Gentile world. Thus against every worldly prejudice, and with every earthly disadvantage, Christianity began that career of rapid triumph,

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of permanent conquest, and steady extension which is the living miracle of history. It gained Jew and Greek and Roman, from remote province and central capital, in the peasant's hovel and Cæsar's household. And when the great empire went to pieces the spiritual kingdom survived the general wreck,—and Christ's image and superscription were fixed where Cæsar's were effaced! Well wrote Pilate, in unconscious prophecy, and placed it over the crucified: "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews," and wrote it "in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin,"—for His royal authority was soon to be recognized by all these dominant races, and their three languages were to be employed in proclaiming the Gospel. It could use them all. It had truth that, properly to express it, required alike the rigid Hebrew, with its sacred vocabulary; the flexible Greek, with its familiarity with philosophy, and the sonorous Latin, with its adaptation to eloquence. And when these languages were dead,—relegated to preserve unchanged a completed revelation,—the living tongues that took their place had learned to voice the truth of God, to praise the Name of Christ, to tell the story of the Cross. And thus the fragments into which the Roman Empire was broken, and the barbarian races that helped to break it, destined to form states anew, received the Christian leaven as an element of their life, and have transmitted it unimpaired in its power and the increasing purity of the truth, to the nations of the present day. An American, as one

born out of due time, but the heir of all the ages, needs to recross Europe and to recall history while he does it, to know truly the blessedness of his inheritance of Christian civilization and enlightened faith.

When Christ gained Paul, the Gospel made a long stride. The great Apostle in his own person bridged the chasm between Jew and Gentile. As at once a Jew and a Greek and with the broad culture of both, he brought the Gospel to the attention, and commanded for it the consideration of education and refinement. With his missionary energy he bridged the Hellespont and joined Asia and Europe in Christian union.

At this period, classic antiquity had attained its height and climax. The fine arts, especially sculpture, together with architecture, had reached their highest mark. The chiefest works in Greek and Roman literature had already been produced. The Platonic philosophy, the profoundest product of Greek thought, was recast in Latin by Cicero, and read in the two languages; and lastly Roman Jurisprudence, "the principal legacy" of the Roman Empire to subsequent times, was complete. And this is the best that can be said. But religion? But morality? Atheism among scholars, immorality among the common people, and inhumanity among all classes and races everywhere, prevailed. Such was the supreme juncture in human history when Christ stepped to the front,—when the voice

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of Him who spake as one having authority was first heard in the world. Such was the situation of the most advanced of mankind when "the word" which "was God" began to operate upon the mind and heart and conscience of humanity. Such was the state of Europe when Paul introduced the Gospel and when his successors extended the conquests of Christianity across the continent. Under the influence of Christ's teaching thus extended, Atheism gave place to a rational faith in God. Injustice was impeached in the presence of a regenerate moral sense. Unchastity, and even immorality that had gloated before in the public gaze, fled abashed, at the rebuke of Christian purity. To-day cruelty and every inhumanity are passing away at the approach of Christian sympathy and Gospel philanthropy.

These large results were not effected suddenly. Nor even yet are they complete. Time is an element in all great work, even when the chief agent is God. There were six days of the creation—and those days were ages. Surely, then, in the progress of moral reform and religious enlightenment,—where human volition complicates the problem, where perversities of will and habits of sin may counteract and delay the Divine operation,—it should be expected that generations may pass away before the final result shall be reached. But no one can compare the past with the present, the dead with the living, the ancient with the modern,

of the history of Europe, in civil government, in social customs, in moral habits, in practical benevolence, in the average humanity,—without being able to see an immense change, and to trace it to its true causes:—nothing else than Christianity were adequate to its vastness, or correspondent with its character. It is the leaven of the Gospel that has produced the improvement. It found despotism dominant in states, and it wrought for liberty. It found war the normal condition of races, and it made for peace. It found human suffering of little esteem, and it enkindled in the human heart a Divine sympathy. It found even life lightly violated, and it awakened a holy and awful sense of its sacredness. The forces of Christianity are equal to these effects. When Christ taught men a prayer to God beginning: “Our Father,” there was infused into the world a sense of the dignity of mankind. When men read in the Gospel, “God so loved the world,” the Divine estimate taught them to put a new value upon manhood, and helped them relatively to love one another. When the great historic facts, Christ’s death on the cross and His Resurrection from the grave, were taught as religious truths,—the one a Divine provision for salvation, and the other, life and immortality brought to light, for all mankind,—society and souls felt an inspiration in redemption, and the “power of an endless life.” Under such light it became a grand thing to live, and sublime to love one another with the love of

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Christ, to be actuated toward our fellow-man by the impulses of brotherhood, of fellowship, and helpfulness. In a cause that is one with God and man, in a service that is rendered alike to your kind and to Christ, selfishness becomes repulsive, sacrifice a pleasure, and benevolence a second nature, a regenerate grace. One who has read in the Latin of Cæsar and Livy and Tacitus, of the ancient Gauls, Helvetians, Germans, and Britons, and other barbarian races of the rude and cruel age, when these nations were in paganism, and has observed the home life, the social habits, the national traits, and the religious character of their modern representatives, the French, the Swiss, the Prussians, and the English, and the other Christian nations of the Europe of to-day,—any enlightened man making such a comparison will feel devoutly thankful for that powerful agency, the blessed leaven of the Gospel, introduced into human society. Christendom is a matter of history. There is such a thing as a Christian nation, though the average inhabitant be not a saint. Christianity is a fact,—its mighty social force, its immense moral effect are facts. And the Gospel, it has been well said, “is a living system” of progressive influence.¹ “New obligations are brought to consciousness from day to day. Cruel amusements of heathen antiquity died out under the silent influence of the Christian spirit. An atmosphere of feeling is produced in

¹ Fisher. “*Beginning of Christianity*,” p. 31.

which unrighteous legislation and brutal punishments cannot survive." "The treatment of the poor, of the insane, and of the suffering and afflicted classes generally, which failed to shock the sense of a former day, is now felt to be inhuman. All these developments, whether of thought and belief, of worship and devotion, of policies or morals, as far as they are sound and wholesome, are due to the genius of Christianity." When Christ spake the parable of the Judgment: "I was a hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me";—and added, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me"; the utterance was a great heart-throb of Divine life which quickened the hearts of His followers to a constant pulse of Christian love never to cease to beat in beneficent deeds. When Paul wrote the paragraph: "Whatsoever things are true; whatsoever things are honest; whatsoever things are just; whatsoever things are pure; whatsoever things are lovely; whatsoever things are of good report; and if there be any other virtue, or anything else praiseworthy, *think on these things*," he set as a subject for human thought the practical outline of Christian life, whose shaping influence ever since has tended to elevate society and to ennoble souls. Yes! Christianity is history; and

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Christendom an actual fact. Just as changes in the looks of our friends, which pass unnoted under daily observation, become clearly visible after an interval of absence, so the progress of society, which within narrow limits and periods may be imperceptible, shall, across a century, a millennium, a Christendom, show vast gains. When Paul at Troas, in the night-vision, beheld a man of Macedonia,—a vivid image of his mission, inviting him into Europe,—he only surely gathered that it was a call of God. But how it would have exalted his soul could he have foreknown all the tremendous interests pending his decision. When Paul and Silas were in prison at Philippi, there was none nigh on earth;—it required an angel from heaven to bring them sympathy. But their presence there, and wherever else they planted Christianity upon the continent of Europe, has enlarged religious liberty, has infused humanity into the hearts of magistrates, has ameliorated prison discipline, has abolished the cruelty of scourging, put humane restrictions upon solitary confinement, and greatly reduced the cases of capital punishment.

Society's treatment of its criminal and its unfortunate classes is a fair test of its Christian status. Extending its protection to the lowest, it shall be a bulwark to human rights, in all their higher levels. What grand gains that have been made might be enumerated. "The fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon."

My friends, in Christendom at large, or in the best type of a Christian nation, we see Christianity in its great results. Candid skeptics must admit such facts. But Christendom and Christian nation are but aggregations of individuals, combinations of effects that have their source in the Christian churches and Christian homes. And these again are kept in their highest average in personal character by the influence of the truest and most genuine among them. As there were three apartments in God's ancient sanctuary, the Tabernacle, namely, the Outer Court, the Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies, so to-day there are three degrees of approach to God,—there is Christendom at large that feels the effects of Christianity, the Sabbath congregations that acknowledge its influence, and the working church that promotes it. Oh, that all would join this working force. Let the goodly cedars in the house of our God be increased in number; let the chosen groups of them, the groves of our churches that crown the hilltops with beauty and fill the valleys with verdure, be carefully cultured and steadily multiplied; let the whole broad forest of humanity be reached by the works and threaded with the walks of Christian refinement; then shall the prophecy of the text be fulfilled.—Christ the Great Sower dropped a handful of corn upon the hills of Palestine,—and lo! the whole earth shakes like Lebanon!

My friends, in the contributions you make as

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you have done to-day in behalf of missions abroad, or to sustain the cause at home, you scatter the good seed,—you have extended your hands and planted it. And in so doing you have also stirred the soil in which thrives your own life, in the church and in the home. Thank God that the spirit of Christianity is the spirit of missions. Thank God that the Gospel has such Divine vitality, and such power of propagation in the human heart. Thank God that the good seed has been committed to our hands to scatter, and that the field is the world. Through the whole world shall roll the river of the water that proceeds from the Throne, with the Trees of Life on either side of it.

II

THE TWO TYPES OF MEN

"For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom;

"But we preach Christ crucified: unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness;

"But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."—I CORINTHIANS i. 22, 23, 24.

THE address of this epistle is: "To the church of God which is at Corinth, with all that in every place call upon the name of the Lord." The text, therefore, sprang from a real occasion. The Gentile churches generally, and the Corinthian in particular, were mixed communities of Greeks and Jews. But the passage, while depicting these two peoples, has more than a local and temporary value. It has a breadth of bearing and a depth of meaning which make its application and its instruction universal and permanent. It met first the special exigency of the author's generation, and then extended its lesson to each successive period and people.

The Jew and the Greek are types by which society at the present time may be classified. The truth of the text is based in human nature, and is therefore general and universal. There is a class of

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men who are devout without being thoughtful; and there is another who are intellectual but unspiritual.

Christ, before Paul, characterized certain Jews as "an evil generation that seeketh after a sign." And there are men of like sort to-day who have an inordinate appetite for the marvellous and sensational. The very men who killed Christ became the easy dupes of delusion and imposture. And of the same class are those who to-day either carelessly neglect the Gospel or consciously reject it, and accept some pitiful superstition or fanaticism. These shun the churches where a Revelation is proclaimed that commends itself as Divine by its influence upon the lives of men, and seek the séances of trance-dreamers whose so-called disclosures neither enlighten the conscience nor purify the heart.

And another group, though entirely different, come into this line of thought as those who require a sign. There are believers and seekers of this sort in the Christian assembly. Good, simple people so relate their experience: They "saw a light," they "heard a voice," they "felt a touch." And they use these words in the literal sense. Well, I would not dispute their honesty. God can adapt His truth to human need. But as a rule these things are delusions. Let not such take a spiritual pride in their experience. A belief coming through the reason and conscience is better. "Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed." And yet

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there *are* those who seek for such experiences, and defer the duty of simply following Christ, in the desire of a striking or stunning conversion. They look to find God in the whirlwind, the earthquake, and in the fire, instead of the still, small voice. The old prophet had to be corrected of that error. And when he was enlightened, he learned that there were seven thousand in Israel who had not bowed the knee to Baal. And many a preacher, since that day, has found in his congregation numerous converts, God's humble and hidden ones, to whom the spirit has come so quietly that they can not tell whence He cometh or whither He goeth, but yet are born of the spirit.

But there is a class of persons of an opposite kind, who in the text are typed by the Greek. It is the intellectual-unspiritual people.

This age is one of great scientific activity. All over the earth patient and profound minds are investigating nature, and almost daily discoveries result from their studies. The whole physical universe has been surveyed by science. No department of nature has been neglected or overlooked. But such concentration of attention upon material phenomena gives undue importance to physical as compared with spiritual objects. Men who come to such studies with keen intellectual insight, but with dull or indifferent religious discernment, and who pursue these subjects exclusively, acquire such a one-sided development as at length renders them

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almost incapable of the cognizance of spiritual objects. So long as the world of matter fills the eye and occupies the mind, it eclipses from sight the moral life of man and even the glory of God. Even a dime held close to the eye can shut the sky from sight; so this little earth, filling up our narrow-sightedness, may eclipse from view the blessed Heavens.

But there is a cast of mind and mould of spirit different from either of these. It is the class who unite what is best in both Jew and Greek into a new and nobler type. They are the people who are neither simply devout without being thoughtful, nor merely intellectual without being spiritual; but who are at once devoutly reflective, intelligently religious. Paul in the text terms these "them which are called, both Jews and Greeks." To the same intent was his benediction. "The peace of God . . . shall keep your *hearts* and *minds* through Christ Jesus." The heart may sometimes predominate; sometimes the mind; but it is the devotion of the two that produces the best type of Christian life. This type of man cannot fill its eye with physical forces and earthly elements,—cannot satisfy its intelligence with planetary spaces and cosmical manifestation,—but, looking into nature as a mirror, sees there the reflection of a more solid sphere and substantial universe: the home of the soul, the abode of God.

This class is the true type of man. It always

outnumbers either of the others, and indeed both at once, and shall more and more with the progress of true knowledge. There need be no apprehension of an irrepressible conflict between human learning and Divine Revelation. As Judaism and the Gospel have joined to widen the River of Life, so Religion and Science shall unite to strengthen its current and deepen its volume to carry on the commerce between earth and Heaven—between God and the soul.

At the present a factitious importance relatively attaches to science in the fact that the abler minds pursue it and the masses stand aloof, while with the Gospel, "not many mighty, not many noble are called," and "the common people hear it gladly." It is a false conclusion of superiority that is drawn from this fact. But it does not deceive the far-sighted soul, that knows what is true dignity and manliness. The real honour of Science is that, applied to the arts, it becomes of general benefit, in providing for the wants of men. So it is the chiefest glory of Christianity that it is adapted for universal blessing, and that it meets the deepest human needs. It is so profound that celestial intelligence finds delight in it,—“the angels desire to look into it”; it is yet so plain and simple that the feeblest of mortals can receive it,—“the wayfarer, though a fool, need not err therein.” High education or the lack of culture does not affect the case. Every degree of mental

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capacity is included in the Christian type of man. Christianity teaches that there is a truer test of manhood than mere intellect (in which devils may excel). The common mind by intuition receives Gospel truth as surely and accurately as the trained intellect by its logical process. This fact is proof that the Gospel is the Truth most adapted to man. Among the human powers of apprehension the supreme place is held by the moral sense. The quivering conscience and the living love of our common humanity thrill and throb, *as one heart*, responsive to the common truth, the same faith, and the one life in Christ.

We measure physical energy by its effects. We know the strength of heat conserved in steam by the machinery it propels. We see its force in the sun, by the gales it sets in motion which snap off chimneys like pipe-stems, and twist down trees like straws; or when its mighty beam pumps up the waters of the sea to the reservoirs of the sky to keep constant the water-power of the rivers and the flow of springs. We know the energy of electricity by the tremendous bolts it throws or by the marvellous velocity with which it carries the correspondence of the continents. We know the force of light by the daily revelation it makes, in throwing off the robe of darkness from the globe, and the artist-skill with which it paints each widespread scene upon the miniature canvas of the optic nerve. We know the power of gravitation by the

constancy with which it follows a missile, as with an invisible elastic cord, and draws it back to the ground, or attends the planets in their orbits as if they moved in grooves of a solid firmament.

But the Gospel is a power of God greater than any in nature. It is the gale that, begun at Pentecost in the "rushing, mighty wind," has swept through the world to purify its social atmosphere. It is the sun of righteousness whose silent uplifting force keeps up the circulation of the River of Life that refreshes the earth. It is the electric cable that transmits the message of prayer to the other shore, and brings back God's answer to man. It is the light that, lifting the darkness from human hearts, thrills them with vistas of the infinite, and disclosures of immortal glory. It is the gravitation that follows the wanderers, and restores them to their spheres, to "shine as the stars for ever and ever."

But again. We estimate the cleverness of an invention, or the wisdom of a system by its adaptation to its design. Take the mechanism of the human body,—nay, that is too much,—take any one of its parts,—the ear, the eye, or the most wonderful of all, the organ of voice. What wisdom is evinced in its adaptation to the purpose of speech,—its capacity to articulate the millions of syllables that make up the aggregate of universal language. The voice! How even when it blasphemes it must speak the skill of its heavenly in-

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ventor, and the wisdom of the Divine thinker. Or, if we contemplate the soul with its vast apprehension, how like a God,—with its trinity of capacity: intellect, sensibility, and will,—how marvellous in fitness for his sphere, seems this crowning work of creation, a personal and morally-responsible being, an immortal man.

Now apply this test to the Gospel of Christ. The plan of grace stands or falls upon its adaptation to human redemption and development. Take the truth of immortality, "the power of an endless life," as, not indeed first announced, but finally demonstrated by the Resurrection. What an added sanctity it throws around the soul; what a hold it has upon the motives of the heart; what a control it wields over the conduct of the life! Almighty power and infinite wisdom meet in this great truth: The Maker eternal and His creature immortal,—the soul and its God.

Once more. Take the truth of the atonement, the blessed doctrine of Christ's death, which at once vindicated the law and revealed the love of God. It was needful that while Sinai thundered of punishment, Calvary should lift up the Cross to catch the bolts and glance them off from man. Justice and Mercy—the inviolability of law and the potency of love,—these join as the upright and the transverse beams to form the cross of Christ. Rigid rectitude of life, and the outstretched arms of love have their sublime symbol in the crucifixion.

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No less a demonstration than such an atonement could have wrought such reform as results from this doctrine. Hardened and hopeless souls have become contrite and trustful. Bitter misanthropy and blaspheming despair have given place to sweet charity toward sinful men and a passionate love for the pardoning God. The Divine devotion of Christ is an inspiration to the disciples to devote their lives to saving souls. No other truth hath borne such fruit. The cursed Tree that bore the bleeding Christ hath become the Tree of Life for all believing souls. They form a triumphal procession to accompany the Saviour to the New Jerusalem. Even now, out of all lands they come, they throng, casting palm branches in His pathway, while the fore-front, far off yonder, have entered the eternal city. Here a glad acclaim quickens in the march "Hosanna in the Highest"; there a shout of rejoicing "as the sound of many waters," announces the Victory: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power and wisdom and riches, and honour, and glory and blessing." Is there a soul who would not march in such a procession, who would not have part in such a song?

"Lift up, lift up thy voice with singing,
Dear land, with strength lift up thy voice.
The kingdoms of the earth are bringing
Their treasures to His feet. Rejoice!
He comes! Let all the earth adore Him;
The path His human nature trod
Spreads to a royal realm before Him,
The *Light of Life, the Word of God.*"

III

PRESENT ATTITUDE OF SCIENCE AND RELIGION TOWARD EACH OTHER

A LECTURE

SCIENCE and Religion may be defined as, respectively, The Ascertained Truths of Nature, and The Tenets that Answer to the Religious Faculty. Or their definitions may be given as The Knowledge of Material Phenomena, *with the Scientific Hypothesis Regarding it*; and The Conviction of Obligation, *with the Accepted Theology Concerning it*.

In the former sense, religion and science are in accord. They are real science and true religion. They have a common origin, and, we will say, Author. In the same great order or system of things, they are correlated and mutually sustaining. However complex the Universe, it tolerates no antinomies. The principle of compensation that sustains a Cosmos, can keep the balance in the elements of a planet! The two Tables in the Arcana of Nature,—the Law of Matter and the Law of Spirit,

¹ About 1883.

—when fully disclosed will be found harmonious. Side by side, like the Cherubim above the Ark of the Covenant, Science and Religion, with the tips of a pair of wings in friendly touch, and the others extended toward the infinite, indicate the Presence of the Mystery, and with rapt faces blent in one look, direct the reverent beholder to the two-fold Testimony, both alike written with the finger of God.

But in the other definition or significance, religion and science are at variance. Here a new and an imperfect element is introduced into the problem. We have to do, here, not with Divine truth itself, but with human concepts of it.

It is evident that science and religion, in this more general conception, are alike liable to error. Indeed, in each, as a system of human construction and the product of finite knowledge, imperfection is inevitable.

This accounts for the apparent conflict between religion and science; it is the actual hostility of falsehood and truth. The antagonism indicates somewhere the presence of error. As this is rejected, whether discovered under the robe of religion or in the garb of science, the contradictions disappear. The two will harmonize in proportion as both are reduced to truth.

The right attitude, therefore, for religion and science to maintain toward each other is, not indeed hostility, not even mere tolerance, but co-operation,

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—the mutual respect and reciprocal helpfulness of elements which are clearly inter-dependent in the larger order of the world, as, in the lesser system of our being, are the physical and the spiritual, body and soul. They are two departments in the one great work of God on earth, the stupendous enterprise of Heaven in human behalf,—to unfold and ennoble alike the mind and heart of man. It is the providential division of labour by which the greatest results are secured. The aim of both is the same, namely, to discover truth and to utilize it for man's good. Neither has anything to fear from the other; for truth is ever the ally of truth. It is unworthy of Science to invade the domain of Religion to make gratuitous negations of the foundations of faith. And it is inconsistent in Religion to trespass upon the province of Science to make needless denials of its theories.

It is the genius of Science to examine and classify physical facts. Its instruments are finite in their range, confessedly incompetent to find out God. It is unscientific therefore in the physicists to deny His being and to attack the Theology of Belief.

It is the spirit of Religion to seek the proper objects and to accept the clear apprehensions of the moral sense, the ethical sensibility or spiritual faculty. Its instruments, the Conscience, Intuition, and Revelation, profess to transcend the microscope, spectroscope, and telescope in sphere and power. With these it can analyze action, and

classify character. It can disclose the spectrum of the light of righteousness, from the most delicate tremor of colour to the most intense splendour. It can bring the far-off nigh, and the infinite into the range of human vision. A pure heart is the lens through which one must look to see God.

That were poor science which, from one set of facts, would derive conclusions in conflict with another and greater group,—that, with a few desultory discoveries, would assume to dispute ultimate principles,—that, with fragmentary phenomena, the presentments of the senses, would profess to disprove the profoundest intuitions and necessary first-truths.

And, in like manner, that were pitiful religion which should be found at variance with the facts of nature,—that could be successfully contradicted by the demonstrations of science. It were far too small an orb for the object of faith, that could be eclipsed by an atom.

It is not to be ignored, however, that certain prevalent theories of science appear to antagonize Christianity, and by a bold suggestion if not open avowal of materialism invite, nay challenge discussion.

And this surely will prove profitable; it is doubtless providential. At a time when the schools of Divinity in mutual charity had laid aside polemics,—when ecclesiastical gladiatorship is as antiquated as knight-errantry,—when what Melanchthon called

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the "rabies Theologorum," and every form of mad-dogmatism are as rare as hydrophobia, the devout thinker finds in this question fresh incentive for intellectual effort and philosophical reflection, and an exercise in controversy that, directed against a proper opponent, shall awaken devotion, and develop conscientiousness. The polemics of believers, between school and school, though doubtless conducted earnestly, were at best but a drill, or dress-parade; but the contest to-day is a real engagement, where the issues are vital, and all must take sides, and only one can be right.

Much of discussion may be avoided and the controversy shortened, while the question shall be more simple and clear, and the conclusion more certain and sound, by keeping in view the discriminations that have been drawn, on the one side, between true science and the theories of scientists; and on the other between true religion and the systems of Theologians. In the past, many a contest has gone against the defenders of the faith, when the result has not militated against the truth. When Astronomy proved that the earth moves, it had no contest with Scripture, but only with its interpreters; and Astronomy has opened a new volume in the evidences of Divinity. When Geology seemed to contradict Genesis about the six days of creation and read the hoary age of the earth in the wrinkles upon her brow, it did not conflict with Revelation, but only with the commentators; and Geology has

discovered in the inner Temple of Nature new tables of Testimony to the Truth. The defeat was victory. The present generation has quietly abandoned the ancient interpretations, and the result is a larger and juster apprehension of God's Word.

This age is one of great scientific activity. "Many are running to and fro, and knowledge is increased." In every nation patient and profound minds are investigating nature, and almost daily discoveries result from their studies. Arts and sciences are multiplied; the old have enlarged their domain, and new ones have sprung into being. The microscopist, like a magician, has opened up an invisible world and revealed its wonders to human view; the geologist, like the inspired Moses, has read the Law on tables of stone as God's finger wrote it of old; the chemist, like an anointed high-priest, has entered the inner Temple of the Divine Presence and seen God at His creative work; the inventor has boldly thrown his belt around the shaft of Power, projected from the Unseen, and connected invisible energies with the work-shops of men; and the astronomer, like John on Patmos, as with an angel's reed has measured the distances and dimensions of the heavens. In short the whole physical universe has been surveyed by science; and no department of nature has been neglected or overlooked. These scholars, by their studies, discoveries, and inventions, as their science is applied to the arts, have placed their fellow-men under a last-

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ing debt of gratitude. They have added vastly to the sum of human comfort and enjoyment. And from none are they entitled to higher respect than from the sacred profession whose mission it is, not merely to ameliorate the condition of mankind in this life, but to secure the happiness of humanity both in the life that now is and in that which is to come. And indeed none are readier to recognize the blessings which the devotees of science have conferred upon mankind, than the ministers of religion. Whatever antagonism arises in these times between these two priesthoods,—the one in physical, the other, spiritual things,—originates with the former rather than the latter. Whatever has been the fact in the past, in this respect, certainly in the present, the tables are quite turned, and one must read the works, not of Theologians but of the Scientists, to find lofty assumption, arrogance, bigotry, and dogmatism. Not to notice the insect skeptics that bask and buzz about the great lights of science to sun their conceit,—who feed on the floating detritus of truth, the newspaper scraps and the crudities and vagaries and flippancies ventilated in platform harangues, everywhere in the air;—it is not to be ignored that the accredited high-priests of Science have transgressed the proper frontiers of their province, and invaded the domain of Religion and Theology, by the utterance of pronouncementoes, and the promulgation of theories that would “remove the ancient landmarks” of social

morality as well as religion, blot out the conscience as well as the Scriptures, and explode at once the doctrines of the soul and of God.

With such a challenge, controversy was inevitable, and to decline the gauntlet were dereliction and poltroonery.

It will profit the Biblical scholar and the Christian believer to make careful observations of the position, and first determine whether somewhat of the controversy may not be averted by a prudent relinquishment of any uncertain interpretations, or untenable tenets not essential to Belief;—whether by a strategic manœuvre and advance, a part of the ground, all that is solid, now held against them, may not be taken from their opponents and occupied as a proper enlargement of the field of Theology,—and whether in so doing new armour for religion may not be provided from the arsenal of science, and weapons wrested from the hands of its enemies prove strong defences of the Truth.

The believer in God and His Word surely has nothing to fear. He who by profession is devoted wholly to the truth can afford to be candid, confident of security, and assured of victory whatever the substantial outcome and final result. Nay, in the very nature of his position, holding only verity inviolate, he must take the lead himself when invited to investigation.

The grand results of current science may be summarized under the terms, evolution and con-

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servation. It is these principles and their alleged sequences, logical implications, and resultant hypotheses, that have spread apprehension, though not much consternation among the friends of religion and defenders of Revelation.

But, now, in the first place, the Atheistic elements of these theories are not the logical deductions of reason from the facts, but the factitious product of an assumption wholly foreign to them, analogous to poetic justice, the fiction (to use Tyndall's phrase against him) of "the scientific imagination." To get rid of God, and to show how needless to account for nature and its phenomena is the being of a personal Creator, science (and here we say science for courtesy) endows matter itself with all capacity. The atom,—whatever that is, confessedly a hypothetical entity,—is assumed to be the seed of all being, the fount of all force. Professor Tyndall says, in his famous Belfast address, "I prolong the vision backward across the boundary of experimental evidence, and discern in matter . . . the promise and potency of every form and quality of life." Mr. Huxley says, in one of his lay-sermons, "If there is one thing clear in the progress of modern science, it is the tendency to reduce all scientific problems, except those which are purely mathematical, to questions of molecular physics; that is to say, to the attractions and repulsions, motions and co-ordinations of the ultimate particles of matter." And Mr. Spencer, in his "First Principles,"

thus oracularizes: "The transformation of an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity into a definite, coherent heterogeneity, which goes on everywhere until it brings about a reverse transformation, is consequent upon certain simple laws of force."!! "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have him in derision." And human intelligence at such verbiage breaks out in uncontrollable merriment. Indeed we can fancy the writer himself, when his thought, or ink, had so spread itself, as leaning back in his chair and finding relief in a hearty laugh. What is so witty as the unconscious bathos of super-wisdom? Mr. Bowne has subjected these assumptions to the "reductio ad absurdum," in his incisive and characteristic manner. In one aspect, according to this theory, matter is inert, in another astir, in a third both. All these views are hypothetical,—the last paradoxical. "Matter is at once the inactive, and the possessor of all kinds of activity,—which is simply a conjunction of contradictions, a logical chimera."¹

To the scientific mind, "falsely so-called," this wonderful molecule may account for the Cosmos; but to common sense, sanctified or otherwise, it seems less difficult to grasp the old and infinite, than this new and infinitesimal Universe. In the last result of this theory we have the paradox of science becoming ignorance, and holding as known

¹*The New Englander*, Vol. XXXIII, p. 623.

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the unknown and unknowable. In pursuit of the elusive atom and fascinated with the *ignis fatuus*, our younger sister has ventured beyond her depth. "We have a little sister, and she sometimes puts on airs!"

But whether the atom be inert or astir, or both, (if to the scientist that is conceivable), the motion and potency are equally unaccountable. And whether identical or different, there remains the unresolved problem of that legion-law under which it forms into rock, soil, tree, horse, or man; and determines its force into instinct, intellect, reason, volition, affection, and conscience. We would ask of the atom, or catechize the scientists, Whence this endowment of power? In the last result, its logic ends in darkness. It cannot commit the sacrilege that it would. Its stop is abrupt at the veil that hangs before the most holy place. The wisest and most learned student of nature, while he may assume to interpret human life without the concession of a soul, and the Universe without God, is yet constrained to concede that there is somewhat beyond the reach of material science, an inscrutable mystery of spiritual truth.

In the second place, the basic truths of these theories,—the law of natural selection, in matter, or the survival of the fittest, and the law of conservation in force, or the persistence of energy,—to the extent that they may be accepted as established, so far from dispensing with a Personal Creator, afford

fresh testimony to a Presence of Intelligence, an Artificer of Power not only, but purpose, will, wisdom and benevolence; and furnish the teleologist with new arguments for belief in God.

When one studies specimens of human mechanism, the more complex and complete he finds the machine, the greater he conceives the genius of the inventor. Science, in studying the methods of Nature, has only discovered the *modus operandi* more elaborate and wonderful than heretofore supposed. So far from dispensing with a Will, Thinker, Designer, Inventor, Artificer, or Creator, each *modus*, each method,—that in physics and that in force,—renders Him indispensable. Evolution and Conservation, so far as proven, and all the more if fully true, add emphasis to the old, and bring forward new argument for the Divine being, especially His unity, wisdom, and benevolence. Take Darwin's theory of the origin of species in the vegetable world, and the animal, as well, up to the impassable chasm that differentiates man,—and even all the more if that chasm were crossed,—how it certifies the unity, how it magnifies the wisdom that operated in creation; and the principle of the survival of the fittest,—applied to the human body for instance, conserving the sound and healthy, and eliminating the feeble and diseased down to the last analysis and through all the infinitesimal elements of this physical mechanism, thus both conserving the health of the stock, and improving the

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type of the race from age to age,—how all this testifies of the power never pausing nor suspended, and glorifies the benevolence of the ever careful and thoughtful God.

This has not escaped the notice of scientists. But one acknowledges the force of the argument, while another denies it. Professor Draper affirms of the theory of evolution: "There is no thought of modern times that more magnifies the glory of" the Creator. "Evolution has for its foundation . . . a recognition of the original, the immutable *fiat* of God."¹ But Mr. Tyndall, speaking of Darwin himself, declares, "It is the mind thus stored with the choicest materials of the Teleologist that rejects teleology,—seeking to refer these wonders to natural causes." One may get so near the light as to be blinded by it. Mr. Darwin always wore his theories as a pair of spectacles, and anything outside their rim was invisible. Mr. Draper took the larger view of later and unbiassed scientists. Such minds clearly perceive that the natural causes themselves require to be accounted for, must have had an adequate origin; and the greater the range of law, and the longer the trend of order, the more surely the chain leads back to Mt. Zion and points up to God. The moral reason cannot rest on the edge of an abyss; it must bridge the chasm. It must carry across the chain of evolution; it must

¹ *Popular Science Monthly*, Vol. XII, p. 115.

complete the circuit of correlation, and find a beginning for material phenomena in an adequate Spiritual Reality,—an equivalence for all natural dynamics in Divine Omnipotence. The admission of physical, involves the recognition of Final Causes,—the good and wise ends,—that point to One Great First Cause.

Which best could have built and ever support the stupendous mechanism of the Universe:—unconscious energy; or intelligent Power? Which is absurd and which conceivable:—a self-existent Atom, endowed with power to evolve a man, unconscious itself, but evolving a consciousness, unintelligent, but evolving an intellect, irresponsible, but evolving a conscience (a sense of moral law which by the hypothesis is itself a falsehood); or an Eternal Self-Conscious, Omniscient, Almighty, and Holy Deity, creating a world, a soul? Here is Reality answering to reality, Reason to reason, Spirit to spirit; and Science has its ultimatum in Religion. The true correlates are the soul and God.

IV

CONSCIOUSNESS OF GOD

"In the beginning was the word, . . . And the word was God. . . .

"And the word was made Flesh and dwelt among us. . . ."

—From JOHN i. 1 and 14.

THE being of God is proven in reason, from,
The marks of Design in Nature;
The lines of Providence in History;
The sense of Obligation in Consciousness; and
The instinct of Worship in Universal Humanity.
But this is silent testimony. Can the great
Thinker utter His thought audibly? Has He ever
given it the living voice? These are questions of
profound and awful importance.

The soul is not satisfied with the finite findings
of reason. It reads, indeed, the Universe as a
manuscript of Theology, and the Divine Author's
signature affixed to it, clearly legible to devout in-
telligence; but with the reading there comes an
infinite longing for a *direct* word from the great
Author of All.

It studies History; and, perceiving a progress
in the march of events, rightly interprets it as the
working of Divine purpose; but the cry of the

prophet rises to the lips, "How long, O Lord," with an unutterable yearning for a *personal* response from the silent, hidden, yet ever working will.

Then turning within, it peruses Conscience, a volume of Divinity with the Autograph of God in stereotype edition so unlimited that every soul has a copy of it in the ark of the heart; but awful intimations mingle with the hopeful suggestions, and wring from the earnest soul an outcry for some fuller expression of love.

And at last the anxious soul resorts to the act of worship. Ah! happy thought! Blessed worship,—it is the instinct of permission for nearer approach,—it is the intuition of capacity for spiritual communion with the unseen Divine; it is at once a reminiscence of Eden, and an anticipation of Heaven. Ah, yes! Prayer is itself but response to whisperings of the Spirit. The overtures are from the still small voice, and prayer is the heart's stammering answer. The soul speaks to God, because God first speaks to the soul.

Here is the point of new departure. God hath said too much to say no more. And so, where reason ends, Revelation begins; and "in the beginning God" is the *opening utterance of the word*.

There were blank pages in Nature that required to be filled out with Scripture. Pagan writers essayed it, and failed. The literatures of Antiquity, Egyptian, Chaldean, Persian, Sanscrit, Greek, and Latin, made painful attempts at this high theme,

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feeling after God, if haply they might find Him. But the fact, though a failure, adds emphasis to the universal sense that He is not far from every one of us, and the desire of all nations is that He would make Himself known.

The untaught child and the learned philosopher alike are conscious of the want. A little boy of four years who had torn the skin from his finger was told by his father, "Never mind, and bye and bye Heavenly Father will mend it." It was a poetic way of putting it, but it was the simple truth. When in due time the hurt was healed and the child first noticed it, with a new light in his eye and with voice hushed to a reverent whisper, he said: "Oh, papa, Heavenly Father has mended it,—but I wish I had seen His hand when He was doing it!" Yes! and the scientific inquirer, who drops the plummet of his thought profoundly into the invisible and infinite mystery, confesses his sorrow when he hears not that it strikes bottom. It is but different ways of expressing the same feeling, the deep instinctive and universal longing for a word from God.

And, my friends, surely our Maker would not mock the noblest feelings of the soul. And He who planted such a hope hath fulfilled it to the heart. The prolonged and awful silence has been broken; the written word has been given to the world; and the Divine voice itself has been heard among men. In the language of inspired clo-

quence, God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son.

Old truths were first reaffirmed, and then new ones revealed. The statutes that had become effaced from the fleshly tablets were restored upon tables of stone. The fragments of the broken tables, of the living law and love of God, originally written on the heart, were amended and reissued. And a long line of God-gifted penmen or amanuenses, from Moses to Malachi, and from Matthew to John, have filled out the full list of God's letters to men. Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. And all Scripture given by inspiration is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

But the thoughts of God that were fullest of grace and truth were reserved to be spoken in person. To perfect the message of God to men, to convey the whole Divine meaning to the human and finite mind required such an Expression as should be God Himself,—and the Word *was God!*

At the time John wrote his Gospel, the Greek mind was familiar with the term which in our Version is translated "*The Word*," as signifying the expressing power of God, the Divine faculty of self-manifestation. And so John, with a devout

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adroitness like that of Paul, finding in the term a point of contact or link of sympathy between Pagan thought and the Gospel, employs the term to designate the Christ, the heavenly utterance, the Divine Expression, the eternal Word, the Voice of God now at length heard in the world. He adopts an expression of the prevalent philosophy as the language of Christianity, that he may render the idea of an Immanuel and the fact of the Incarnation the more easily conceivable, nay a familiar idea, to the devout and thoughtful of the heathen minds of his time. By a step-ladder of their own he assists them to the height of this great truth.

Not only in the proem of his Gospel where he writes, "In the beginning was the word . . . and the word became flesh"; but also in the opening of his first epistle, he repeats the grand idea, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, . . . seen, . . . and handled, . . . of the Word of Life, . . . declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us."

The Word became a person, with whom His followers have converse, communion, companionship, and brotherhood. Thus by word and in Person God revealed himself to His creatures. And this is ever the method of communication between intelligent beings. Language is a revelation of man to man. A stranger may sit by your side, but so long as he is silent he holds himself aloof from you. All you know of him is that *he is* and is *near you*.

You know nothing of his ideas and feelings, his opinions, principles, and disposition. But when his tongue utters something of common interest and so discloses a kindred spirit, you discern something in his nature which invites you to further acquaintance. So the human race long knew of the being of God and felt His mysterious Presence, but only to distrust and to dread Him. The solemn silence of the Unseen awed the soul, until at length it was broken by gracious words of common interest and sympathy, and the infinite distance was bridged by personal fellowship and kinship in the Son of Man.

An English Christian on shipboard in the Mediterranean sought converse with a stranger whom he met at table. But the language of each was to the other an unknown tongue; until once in worship they heard each other utter Hallelujah and Amen, —the former a Hebrew word and the latter Greek, and so, together, representing these two testaments, —when in the common faith and hope the strangers felt the precious communion of soul with soul. Ah! so it is in our devotions we may lift the voice of praise and prayer that reach and touch the infinite love, and hear the response of the Divine Word.

An American clergyman relates that, in Jerusalem, he one day started with explicit directions, but without a guide, to find what tradition points to as the Sepulchre of Christ. As he walked through the streets he fell to musing and dreaming

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gracious heart,—disclosed, revealed, voiced in that word which was full of grace and truth,—And the word was God. And all the words He spake were spirit and life, to vitalize human spirits and to spiritualize human lives. Oh, let all human tongues respond with prayer and praise to His heavenly grace and His Divine love.

V

BEING FAIR TO CHRIST

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber."—JOHN X. I.

THE church of God a fold, and the good as God's flock,—is the literal significance of this figure. The passage clearly implies what the context explicitly declares, that Christ is "the door" through which alone there is access into the fold. And the direct idea of the text is that to attempt an entrance by some other method is theft and fraud; it is to steal the just claims of Jesus; it is to rob Christ of His honest rights.

Now, please, do not resent this statement as an intolerance of bigotry or an assumption of dogmatism; but look at it fairly, examine it candidly in view of the facts of religion, and in the light of the nature of things.

To "climb up some other way" is to be "a thief and a robber," first, in the disposition it manifests. To withhold from any his fair claims, or to ignore another's proper rights, is to evince a spirit which is dishonest; it is to be wanting in a delicate sense of the strictly just and the rightly due,—it is

the character of the robber, it is the part of the thief.

Now, at this point, we may suppose, for the argument's sake, that the claim of Christ was but that of a man, albeit, of lofty moral attainment or profound spiritual perception, the religious genius and hero of the ages; in other words that His relation to religion was not one of origination, but merely of statement; that He was not a Divine Revealer, but a human discoverer in the domain of morals, just as Columbus was in geography, or Newton and Napier in mathematics. And even upon this supposition, to reap the fruits of the truth He taught, to enjoy the advantages of Christianity without one sentiment of reverence and gratitude to the discoverer, or of homage and love for the teacher, is to prove a robber, is to show the thief. Honest manhood does not forget, much less despise, its benefactors. It yields them the homage of hero-worship at least. When seated in the rail cars, not the roll of the wheels, nor the rush of the landscape past, nor the annihilation of space, so quickens the pulse as does the thought of the name of Stephenson. Or when sailing in the steamer that, majestic, moves in triumph over wind as well as wave, not the ponderous stroke of the engine's power, nor the perpetual plash of the paddle wheels awakens such a throb at the heart, as when it thrills at the name of Fulton. And Watt, and Morse, and Goodyear, and unnumbered others whose discoveries or inven-

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tions descend a legacy forever to the whole human family,—every mention of their names excites, in the honest-minded, sentiments of respect and reverence not unmingled with affection. There is such a thing as a proper homage, a rightful honour, toward those men whose works have blest the race,—a hero-worship, the *want* of which is something more than ungenerous, and the *reverse* of which is simply a shame and a wrong.

What shall be said, then, of those who would pluck the laurel from the brow of Christ and leave only the thorn to adorn His devoted head, who would wrest the honours from that name at which every knee shall bow,—who would divert the faith of the world from the person of Christ and extinguish the trust of the race in the Son of man? If this is not to steal, if this is not to defraud, if this is not to exhibit the disposition of “a thief and a robber,” then there is no meaning in language, no significance in action.

And if the claim of Christ, to be somewhat higher than the Son of man, can be sustained,—if it should prove that He cannot be classed among other benefactors of mankind, but is infinitely above the best of them, not merely in the nature of His work, but of His person,—if it shall transpire that He is the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, what unparalleled enormity, what unspeakable iniquity of robbery is involved in the denial to Him, and the withholding from Him, of the highest homage,

and the holiest devotion of the soul. By as much as religion is superior to commerce and science and the arts; by as much as truth Divine holds the supreme claim to the regard of the heart, to the worship of the soul; nay, by as much as God is God, and His law holy and His grace sacred, by so much shall the denial of God's Anointed and the rejection of Christ's Gospel be proven the part of the thief and the robber,—an unspeakable, awful fraud.

Now *some* religion the human heart *will have!* And these thieves and robbers who scorn and defraud the Christ, who turn aside from the open "door," nevertheless, endeavour to effect an entrance into the fold of God. They yet try by "some other way" to "climb up."

And "the same is" to be "a thief and a robber."

Secondly, in the fact that the Religion which they substitute for Faith in Christ and the Gospel He taught is *borrowed from Christianity without acknowledgment, are these men unfair.*

Take out of their creeds all that is truth, whatever is identical with the Gospel, and what is there left to speak of? Ah! little that could retain a rational faith, little that could secure a hearty trust, little that were productive of a manly character, or promotive to a noble life. All the rest,—whatever is vital to morals, whatever is inspiring to devotion or conducive to spirituality,—belongs to the Gospel, and was first brought to the world, or,

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if not, was first fully affirmed, in Jesus' words. What is but hinted at in nature is stated in revelation; what is darkly suggested in Judaism is clearly revealed in Christianity. And the theft of the thing, by those who turn aside from the wide-open door whence a broad beam of light reaches across the world, that they may climb in at some dimly lighted window,—the theft of the thing, I say, consists in the claim of having obtained from some other source what they derived alone from Jesus Christ. Their moral walk is by the light of the Gospel whose luminous influence is diffused their morality through! Though aside from the main track of splendour that pours forth from the open door, their by-paths of morality are yet illumined from its irradiation.

Take, for instance, the doctrine or idea concerning God, which is the basis of all religious belief. Nature gives evidence of His being;—the lofty skies testify to His power and the human conscience argues for His authority. But that view of God, that knowledge of the Divine character that has enkindled a trust in the human heart and inspired a worship of love to displace that of fear, came first to the world in the words of Him who preached that Sermon on the Mount, the manifesto of Christianity whose opening utterances are beatitudes, and that Farewell Sermon whose blessed text is "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe *also in Me.*" That "glory of God" which is

"in the highest" "Peace on Earth to men of good will," which shone down from the opened heavens at the announcement of Christianity,—even yet as its blessed beams have spread, continues to be "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God *in the face of Jesus Christ.*" And the radicalism, one of whose tenets professes to be "The Fatherhood of God," and yet denies, or ignores, or does not acknowledge that He who taught this truth, "Jesus Christ, is Lord," fails of its own faith at its most vital point. Its adherents, in renouncing the Son of God as having become the Son of man, and His moral Lordship as the authority for human faith, surrender the highest evidence, the really decisive and conclusive testimony, to this tenet of the tender relationship—this truth of "the Fatherhood of God." And what is more pertinent to the subject, that radicalism is robbery which attempts the impossible separation of this truth from Christ.

Take, again, our notion of the worth of the soul and its immortality correlated to God's eternity. The value of character, as between man and man here on earth, is an old idea. It crops out in secular literature as well as the sacred Scriptures. But the dignity of man as man because the offspring of God, as immortal as God is eternal; the unspeakable preciousness of the deathless principle which thinks and feels and wills; lay hidden through the ages, a profound secret with God, until Jesus Christ

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weighed the soul against the whole world and pronounced it of more worth, and attested the sincerity of His estimate by giving Himself for our redemption. Ah, yes! it is Jesus Christ and His Divine Gospel that have practically, as the Apostle says, "*abolished death*," and "brought life and immortality to light." And any system of morals or of philanthropy that teaches the importance of its principles because of the brotherhood of souls akin with God, and that fortifies its morality with the thought of a future life, in ignorance and denial that it derives its idea from the Gospel of Christ, thieves the thoughts of Jesus and robs the purest Being of His highest prerogatives.

But what folly is such robbery, when Christ's copy-right is secure to all moral truth and religious life.

It would seem that the inference were logical, that the more perfect is the morality, the greater is the theft,—albeit *this* is an important practical defect which reduces the supposition of perfectness to absurdity. If to bury but one talent in the earth is to ensure the Master's rebuke, how much more shall one forfeit His favour by whom five talents for moral power are diverted from the church, and not being exerted for Christ, are practically opposed to His cause.

And another inference which seems legitimate is that if the truly honest will only realize how thanklessly they have been helping themselves to

the things of Christ, they will confess their indebtedness,—espouse Christ's service, and acknowledge Him Lord.

I would that all could see Jesus as He seems to me, and would follow Him as I do not! The truth of the context that we must come to God through this only door, would be a hard condition if it intended the acceptance of some particular theory of Atonement, several of which cannot be even comprehended without a metaphysical training, and others of which must be rejected by the sympathetic conscience. No! Christianity is neither a system of doctrine, nor a set of forms. The Gospel consists not of dogma, nor does religion consist of ritual. It is a principle—it is a life.

There are many who are really disciples who have not professed Christ, because an arrogant priesthood of creed or rite assumes to intercept the approach of the soul to the open door. They are without the church organic, but within the one invisible, and their life is a consistent confession of Christ. There are others, who are no disciples, who yet profess to trust Christ's blood and to accept the creed, though with but little thought of its meaning. They are within the church organic but not the one invisible, for their life is a constant denial of Christ. It is not the others but these who have climbed up some other way. And it is not these but the others who have really entered by the door.

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Dear friends, coming to God through Christ is simply to trust Him and love Him, to serve Him and live Him with all your soul. To follow Christ is to *be* and to *do* like Him. Behold the Door! Knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

VI

FREEDOM OF BELIEF

"That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me."—JOHN xvii. 21.

THE idea of the Oneness of Christ's Body of Believers took possession of the Christian mind from the outset. But yet every attempt of the centuries to realize the idea, has revealed an admixture of error in apprehending it. Christian thinkers have seemed vaguely aware of its vastness, but appear scarcely to have grasped its spirituality.

Even the inspiring power has its limitations in the human forms of thought through which alone a Divine Idea can be revealed to the finite mind. Neither the prophets of the Old Testament, nor the Apostles of the New, could have fully understood the magnitude and the grandeur of that kingdom, to predict which, the former were inspired seers; and, to proclaim which, the latter were the Divinely sent.

The language of the prophets, filled as it was with figures drawn from earthly governments, so warped the thought of the inspiring spirit when it

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attempted to find human expression, that by the end of four centuries the spiritual meaning of the idea had been so lost sight of that the Christ was rejected when He came, by the appointed interpreters of the prophets, because He did not actually and outwardly set up the throne of David by force. And the Apostles who were present and heard Christ's prayer for the Unity of His people, were nevertheless, through the limitations of language and of the apprehension of hearers, so incapable, when they preached the idea, of freeing it from incorrect impressions, that within four centuries after their age, the magnificent thought of our Lord—the UNITY OF HIS CHURCH—was so belittled in men's conceptions as to find no better embodiment than the hierarchy of Rome.

The tendency of men's minds is ever toward the outward and the material; it is not easy for them to conceive the immaterial and the spiritual. And hence, when the Spirit revealed to the prophets Christ's reign, the thought at once took the form of David's throne—only with more glory; and so, when Christ would teach His Apostles the spirituality of His kingdom, they failed fully to conceive His meaning; and some of them once contended for the foremost places in the state.

None of these forms of outward authority, or of assumed union, whether they be synods of Protestant Clergymen or schools of Romish Cardinals,—none of these external organisations, whether under

the government of oligarchs (as presbyters, or bishops), or of a despot (as the pope)—none of them realizes Christ's ideal of Christian Unity. And yet *all* of these outward forms of church-organization are attempts to embody the Divine idea, which, since Christ's first prayer breathed it into the breasts of His Apostles, has ever inspired the Christian mind; and are evidence that, though thus perverted, the idea has survived, and cannot die.

Since, therefore, the past ages have failed, it becomes our own to inquire: what are the means by which we may reach the great Ideal? This is to be in our age the chief question of the church.

Protestantism, it cannot be denied, is the parent of denominations. The Reformation, emancipating the human mind from religious tyranny, gave sudden impetus to freedom of thought; and the freed mind sprang with a bound which has never lost its elasticity, to the investigation of the basis of its faith; and the result unquestionably has been schisms and sects.

In our endeavours, therefore, anew to realize Christ's ideal,—the oneness of believers,—the question must first be settled whether these schisms and sects have been a blessing or a curse to the church, and whether such denominational differences and distinctions are consistent with a realization of that of which Christ's prayer was a prophecy.

The history of the past will guide our minds in the settlement of this question for ourselves. As

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long as human nature remains the same, and in the visible church the tares must grow with the wheat, so long must a oneness of external rule prove not only inexpedient but pernicious. Tyranny may be as really (though it be in a petty way) in the decisions of classes and synods and presbyteries, as in the decrees of plenary councils, and the bulls of popes. Pomp and pride attend on power, and pretension and oppression on irresponsibility; and no fancied advancement in our age would secure us against a return of a hierarchy as hateful as the papacy of the Dark Ages, were the different bodies of Protestantism to become consolidated under one government. The enlightenment of our age, to be sure, will secure us against any such result; but the method will be by being very sure to avoid the means by withholding the power. "Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty"; and therefore the only Union which is practicable is under the Great Head who is ascended to heaven. That Head admits of no earthly representative; for the myriad-minded membership in the church can never submit to the dictation, or conform to the faith, of a human mind or combination of human minds as finite and as fallible as their own. Much independence in theological opinion, large variations in religious faith, considerable latitude in Christian practice, and liberality in Christian creed,—these are things which cannot be suppressed without violating the Spirit of Christ in which is lib-

erty, and transgressing the Christian law which is charity.

These differences began to appear even in Apostolic times; as witness the fact that in a matter of practice, Paul withstood Peter to the face; and that on a point of faith, Peter speaks of the views of Paul as including some things hard to be received; not to mention that in a matter of expediency, Paul and Barnabas had "contention" "so sharp" "that they departed asunder one from the other." Differences which would arise between the inspired,—among those who had received the immediate in-breathing of the spirit of Christ,—it must be expected, will reappear in the present and every age, until our finite minds shall have burst the limitations of this life, and expanded to an understanding more adequate to the grasp of infinite truth. And, paradox as it may appear, it is yet a fact in Church history thus far, that, the more quickened have been the Christian activities of any era, the greater have been the differences of opinion; and the more of thought has been given to theology, the greater the variations in the Christian creeds; and, I had almost added, the greater the spirituality, the greater the schisms and the number of sects. As witness, for instance, the age of Augustine and Pelagius, and above all, the entire period of Protestantism. There is a double law in the Christian life, or rather *two* counter-working principles. The one is the law of liberty working outwardly, repel-

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lent in its effect to the extent of independency, and finding its full realization in the Congregational idea. The other is the law of love, working inwardly, affinitive, attractive in its force; drawing all the individual churches, not unto one government, but into one brotherhood; and resulting at last in that Unity which shall realize Christ's ideal.

Any unity which would suppress this independency and even these oppositions of Theology, if for a period it were possible, would be only apparent and temporary; and instead of banishing denominations from the Christian brotherhood, would only result in *another sect*. When Dr. Howe of Philadelphia, a leader in the recent movement for Church Unity, says: "I cannot waste my breath upon a man whose mind is so perverted that he will maintain that 'sect' is a blessing and not a curse—that it is a gift of God and not a tare of the Devil's planting," he asserts, at least for himself, that liberty which, it would seem from his language, he would like others to abdicate; while, at the same time, the arrogance manifested by this Christian man is no small evidence that the church, even in our day, would not be safe under any unity of external organism.

Dr. Tyng, although he declines to enter fully into the Unity Movement, is yet far more in the spirit of a real unity when he says: "I see no benefit accruing from this parading of impossible mixtures. The Divine Providence, and the human

choice and liberty which have found their various working modes of Christian doctrine and duty, will not be bound or altered by any array of words upon the subject. When the wave has gone over, everything will be left as it was. Loving all who love my Lord, I have always felt that my way to promote the general welfare was assiduously to work my own field, and cultivate the Lord's harvest there."

We must seek a theory of church-unity which, while it makes no attempt to reconcile all theological minds by demanding submission to any single system, is yet successful in harmonizing all Christian hearts by inciting devotion to one Lord. When all Christian sects shall have become equally united to the one great "Head over all the Church," they will in that fact have become mutually united one to another. And, indeed, since it is this very union with Christ which constitutes any professing body a Christian church, it follows that there is and always has been a true church-unity; or, in other words, an actual unity in all who are really the church, however few it may have included.

The great duty of the churches to-day is not to re-organize for an outward uniformity by avoiding diversity; but, letting their differences severely alone, to cherish the limited unity existing in the church invisible, until it shall have become visible and universal. The prayer of the Divine Son to

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the Heavenly Father is: "that this church may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee." Let Christian piety take the place of ecclesiastical pride; let a large affection for Christ displace in the breasts of Christians the narrow devotion to *Our* church; let the sentiment of a distinguished divine, "wherever the Lord has a true believer, there have I a brother," become the motto of all the ministry; let the law of love be the administered and practised code in every Christian life of all the professing membership, and Christ's prayer is thereby answered, and its prophecy fulfilled,—"*that they all may be one in Us.*"

Although there are (and ever will be, here) different branches in the Christian Church, just as there are individual churches in the several sects, and individual members in the various communities; yet there are more articles, and more important ones, held in common by the denominations than diverse tenets in their general creed; and it becomes the churches to generalize and unite, in belief and labour, upon these common points of doctrine and duty.

The ancient pagans, because they perceived different methods in the manifestation of Divinity, thought that there were many gods, and worshipped accordingly. That rampant sectarianism which divides up Jesus Christ by insisting more upon distinctive tenets than on the common faith, is but little better than the polytheism of heathendom. It

is a high standard to demand, that Christians shall realize such a oneness of the brotherhood that each church shall rejoice in another's honest prosperity as much as in its own; but this is the standard that Christ requires, and for which He prays. When the churches shall come up to such mutual recognition and communion, such fellowship and fraternity, then already shall have arrived the time prophesied in the prayer of Christ.

The deeper we descend into Christian truth, and the more profoundly we experience its infinite significance, the more nearly do we find ourselves together—united in Christ; and the higher we aspire in Christian life and love, the more closely do we approach the realization of that union which we must have in entering heaven.

Conceiving of Christianity as a tree, the different sects are meant only the more widely to spread its genial shade; and the more perfectly is preserved the balance of the branches, the more symmetry and strength will be given to the general growth. And under whatever branch a Christian body of believers may group themselves, they must all be united, as they find their life in the one common stock and trunk of Christ. And the higher we ascend upon the tree toward the skies, the more closely do we find its twigs intertwined, until a perfect oneness of foliage is found in its infinite leaves which are for the "healing of the nations."

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SUPPLEMENTAL THOUGHTS

(Taken from a Thanksgiving sermon)

Last, but not least, in the outlook, the thing for utmost thankfulness in the annual exhibit at large is, *The Advance in the Evangelization of the Race.*

The facts just cited, and many others, indicate that the body of Christ the church, though pierced and wounded in feet and hands, and head and heart, with nails and thorns and spear, is stepping forth from the tomb of the Ages, risen with power, raised in glory, to recommission the discipleship as never before to "Go into all the world." Ah! the Body moves, quickened with new vigour, inspired with Divine vitality. Once more is the spirit of Christ the Life of the churches, and His presence their inspiration. Now, again, as of old, is He going about doing good.

Much has been said of late about "the Eclipse of Faith," and some prediction indulged in concerning "the Religion of the Future,"—the fancied abrogation of Christianity in a newer Dispensation of Science! But the eclipse has only exhibited more vividly distinct, "the Corona" of the Christian Religion, the crowning glory of "the Faith once delivered to the Saints." Certain dogmas have become obscured. But just so far theology has given place to piety,—dogmatism, to devotion,—systematic belief to systematized benevolence,—a catechetical, to a practical Christianity. In certain of

our interpretations, science has compelled the abandonment of the letter, but has added testimony to the spirit. The schools, at least the pulpits, teach less of "Decrees" and "Free-will," less about "Inability" and "Baptism," the "mint, and anise, and cummin," and attend more to the "weightier matters of the Law, Judgment, Mercy, and Faith." Ministry and membership quarrel less about doctrine and order and form, to fellowship more closely in devotion to what constitutes the whole Law and the Prophets, Love to God and Man. The church may have fewer theologians, but it has more philanthropists; and her creed less of metaphysics, but more of affection and sacrifice. The church has but just found out that her power for the conquest of the world is in the Divine forces, not the forms, of the Faith,—that the extension of the Gospel is by the Golden Rule, the reign of Christ is in the Law of Love.

And in finding it out, the church has awaked to new confidence in the truth. Never before, since the Lord walked visibly with men, has there been firmer faith in the Divine verities,—in the Person, presence and work of Christ, and in the destined conquest of the world for His blessed realm, when Humanity shall turn with whole heart to Him whose alone is the right to reign.

VII

CHRIST AND HIS FOLLOWER

(A COMMUNION SERMON)

"And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth."—JOHN xvii. 19.

THE work of Christ was wrought by His life as well as His death. It did not consist so much in a single act as a continuous disposition and series of actions. And the Atonement as a whole is not exclusively in one fact alone; it resides alike in the final outward fact of crucifixion and in the prior inward fact of consecration. His self-devotion to the redemption of men was really complete when He "consecrated Himself" "for their sakes," although it was upon Calvary that His mission of offering and sacrifice was historically "finished." When first He purposed to lay aside "the glory which He had with the Father before the world was," for the companionship of sinners,

when first He assumed this fleshhood and humanity for man's salvation,—when in His human development, in boyhood, He attained His earliest comprehension of His solemn calling, and said "wist ye not I must be about My Father's business?"—when in His mature manhood He, by baptism, pub-

licly dedicated Himself to the work of Redemption, —when in the desert He met those typical temptations that plied Him through the approaches of self, and repelled them, saying “Get thee behind Me, Satan,” —when in the midst of His ministry, He felt the responsibility of His mission and said, “I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day,” —when in foresight of crucifixion He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem, —when in the Garden, suffering unutterable agony, He said, “Father, not My will but Thine be done,” —and when betrayed and overtaken He shielded His disciples with His own person, saying to the pursuers: “I am He, if therefore ye seek Me let these go their way,” —and, lastly, when on Calvary and the cross, He pours out His life for the world, saying: “It is finished,” —in all these acts, it is the consecration, reaching through them all, that, as a common bond, binds them into one whole—one single work.

This high idea of self-devotion to the truth, consecration for others’ sakes, is a constant force in the soul of Christ: from the manger to the cross it was His very life. The theme of the angels’ hymn was “Good-will to men,” and it was but the prelude to the Gospel itself. Christ’s miracles and parables, His conversations and discourses, His ministry and His crucifixion, were an unintermitted manifestation of His devotion,—one single, continuous demonstration of His Divine love. With a lofty consciousness of God in Him, and an equally

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kindred sympathy for man, He "sanctified Himself," alike to God's truth and man's good. There is such a thing as devotion to one's convictions to the disregard of human sympathy. It was exhibited in Saul of Tarsus when he thought himself doing God a service while making havoc of the church. And so, there is such a thing as pity for a fellow being that compromises God's law, as where one winks at guilt and conceals a criminal. But Christ "sanctified Himself" at once to truth and to men, and so alike upheld God's law and restored a lost race. With an integrity so strict that not a jot or tittle of the law is violated in the Gospel, and yet with a compassion so tender and comprehensive that every one that cometh penitently shall find pardon, Christ's whole life was spent in unselfish devotion to both God and man. ¹ The entire absence of selfishness in any form from the character of Christ cannot be questioned; and not less undoubted was the active presence of pure and lofty motives. His life was not only negatively good, it was filled up with positive and matchless excellence, and was spent directly and wholly in blessing the world. A large portion of it was occupied with teaching; and both in its design and its native tendency Christ's teaching was restorative and healing, and itself at once reveals the motive in which it originated"—(consecration to the truth of God and devotion to the good of man)—"love, profound, unselfish

¹ "Christ of History," p. 229.

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love." . . . "“He went about doing good.” Many felt the benignant and genial influence of His earthly ministry. He relieved and removed a great amount of physical suffering; He created and planted in the world a great amount of physical happiness. He devoted Himself to the [Divine] work of blessing man; and in both [phases] of His life, in His acts and in His words, in the healing spiritual truths which He imparted, and in the unnumbered material kindnesses which He bestowed, we discover one reigning motive”—one impulse and idea which prompted and inspired Him. In the Redeemer’s life,—a life of devotion unto death,—consecration has been intensified into a single syllable, and that one word is *Christ!*

Now the great end of Christ’s work is to produce the same character in His disciples. He says: “I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.” His whole life-work, teaching and atonement, was to save men from death, by lifting them up to a better life, to re-invigorate the race with the spirit of a perfect man and inspire it with the spirit of God. Salvation is not simply a rescue from the *penalties* of sin, but from sin and sinning itself; and redemption is not merely a ticket to heaven, but it is a calling unto Christian living. Christ’s devotion to both God and man,—sanctifying Himself to Divine truth and human good,—was to give mankind a model of consecration, to teach them to exercise for themselves fidelity alike to the

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and consecrated to God—such a life is worth living; it is the only life fit to be lived. A life less than this, how low it is! With never a sense of responsibility for society, how insensible! Never to know a burden of soul, how selfish! And to pass through life thus, in moral apathy and religious indifference, with no approval of conscience, no smile of God, what opportunity gone, what Heaven lost!

But if you would make the most of your own life, if you would develop for yourself a noble soul, make the most you can of others' lives, do the most you may to ennoble others' souls. It is these lives, that imitate Christ,—it is such souls, that are animate with His spirit, that constitute His body the church to continue His presence among men. It is in these lives that the Christ consecrate still frequents the highways and by-ways of society. It is in these lofty lives and noble souls, that walk with God in work for men, that the Son of man still companies in compassion with publicans and sinners, and associates upon terms of equality with the humble and the poor. They do not come with condescension, but with sympathy. They do not extend a dainty touch from the tips of gloved fingers, which holds and is held at arm's length, but they give a grasp with a palm that is warm with the throb of a heart, which takes and is taken to the heart in turn. The surest way to win the sinful is to associate with them,—and to lift the fallen, to fellowship them. One must, like the Master,

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subject himself in the circumstances of those whom he would help. It is in affiliation with humanity that one imitates the Son of Man. "For your sakes He sacrificed Himself, that you also might be sanctified in truth." If you would serve like Him, like Him you must live.

Today, my friends, we have before us the tokens of Christ's consecration, the memorials of His Divine devotion—emblems for the remembrance of His holy broken and His blood shed for us.

SUPPLEMENTAL THOUGHTS

(From a sermon on the text: "If any man serve Me, let him follow Me. (John vi. 16, 17.)")

If there is one great above another of the moral weakness, or perversity of the human mind and heart, it is the desire of men as to what constitutes the Service of God. Apart from the fact of sin in the world as a stimulus to the convictions and a law to the will—it were a matter for standing without, the uncertainty as to what constitutes acceptable worship or a man's work before God.

It is sad to think of the many substitutes for Divine worship adopted in nominal churches, some of which have been an evasion, and all a failure of the true duty. No praiser is man to "do" his religion by formal ceremonial, instead of actual service, to put shadow for substance, and leave work for play. Making the sign of the cross is much easier than carrying a cross itself; and genuflections

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are not so hard as bending the stubborn will; and going into the water or coming to the Font is a much simpler process than cleansing a corrupt heart; and the performance of a ritual far more agreeable than doing the reality; and the recitation of a liturgy and a catechism far less difficult than living up to the belief in faithful life. All this, indeed, by itself is little better than the Pagans' Praying Machine, that is wound up and runs down like a clock.

The True Christian Service is the Imitation of Christ. "If any man serve Me, let him follow Me."

Stated exercises quicken and sharpen the spiritual faculties, develop and direct the religious spirit, and as such they are invaluable instrumentalities that ought always to be improved. Moses climbed the Mount to be alone with God, and after such communion came down to his people with a face that shone with the light of Heaven. Christ frequented retired resorts as upon Olivet where, heart to heart, He might hold close converse with the Father. He attended the synagogues upon the Sabbath, and above all He established a church with stated services and sacred ordinances as His agency on earth. But the real worship of Moses was in his work, in his leading of Israel to freedom, and his founding a nation upon the Law of God. And the real work of Christ was not where He got His power but where He exercised it; not merely when apart from

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the people in prayer, but when He mingled with the multitudes and wrought miracles for them, and taught them by word and deed how to live loftily, —taught them that the saving or the helping of men is the service of God. Not on Olivet, but on Golgotha could He cry, "It is finished."

And the Divine service which above all else is distinctively Christian, that which more than all else makes the disciple a follower of Christ, is helpfulness to men, is the salvation of souls. To carry sympathy to the stricken and the afflicted, to awaken hope and courage in the despondent and disheartened, to inspire reform and moral aspiration in the degraded and the disgraced, to counsel the inexperienced and to assist the needy, in short to give all a brother's hand that thrills warm and cordial with the throb of Christian heart,—a hand of help to uplift and a heart of love to give new life,—*that* is to copy Christ; that is to follow His lead; that is to be a servant of the Lord.

To a truly devoted soul, the sympathy of Christ, or as another has called it, His "enthusiasm of humanity," is the most inviting aspect of His character; and the same spirit in His disciples, the most valuable element in Christian action. This is a distinguishing feature in the beauty of holiness. In this the follower may resemble the Leader.

VIII

RARE MOMENTS—AND LIFE

(A Sermon on the Transfiguration, Read at a Meeting
of the Congregational Ministers' Association)

"And (He) was transfigured before them."—MATTHEW
xvii. 2, MARK ix. 2.

ON the northern boundary of Palestine, Great Hermon lifts its snow-clad summit ten thousand feet above the sea. The highest mountain of the Holy Land, it was a fitting setting for the sublime scene of the Transfiguration. Uplifted between Earth and Heaven, it overlooked the field of Christ's temporal labour; and it was appropriate that it afforded an outlook into the realm of His Celestial glory.

At Cæsarea Philippi nestling upon one of its lower bluffs, Christ only a week since, for the first time, had clearly foretold His approaching Crucifixion; and so now, eight days later, He leads His favoured three up to its summit to witness His Transfiguration. The sad impress of the coming ignominy must be accompanied with a blissful reassurance of His future glorification. It was right that both Christ and His Disciples, brought now

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vision sight of the Cross, should have also a view of the Crown.

In vivid expectation the Saviour had already entered Bethsemane; and in impressive premonition His pathway was approaching the shadow of the Cross. It was meet that He should be assured by personal experience that the black shadow concerning Him, was cast by the light of the glory that awaited Him. Ah, on the height of Mount Hermon, He sought within the confines of the eternal Father's foretaste and promise might comfort against the agony of the Passion on Mount Calvary. For an hour or a night, He communed with His Father, in His own glorified body, in the glory that awaited Him when His hour should come,—when He, like Moses, should ascend the grave,—when He, like Elijah, should be taken up to God.

There were the disciples that *needed* such reassurance. Of these three, who were the choicest of His chosen, and favoured of the Master to share His Father's privilege together,—Peter, the brave and faithful, the best beloved, and James his worthy companion,—were required to be strengthened against the severe strain of the coming days. Surely when they should see their Lord despised and rejected by the people who sat in Moses' seat, they would recall the love and homage paid Him on the height by the Father himself. When they should see Him robed in the glory of His Father, they would remember the luminous

raiment enfolding Him with glory. When they should read the ironical inscription on Mount Calvary, "This is the king of the Jews," they would be reminded of God's voice on Mount Hermon, "This is My Beloved Son."

Ah! It did not fully avail. In their supreme hour of trial, "they *all* forsook Him, and fled." The one called of Christ the Rock for his solid nature, and the two surnamed, by the same Divine insight, Sons of Thunder for their energy of character, were unnerved before the Sanhedrin and Pilate's Judgment Seat. Peter denied his Lord with oath and curse; John ventured into the trial-chamber on the strength of his acquaintance with the High Priest rather than with Christ; and James made no sign worthy of inspired writing.

And yet the Transfiguration did not fail of its part in the mighty aggregate force of truth that constrained them. When Hermon, Calvary, and Olivet were seen to be in one range, and to have the same trend Heavenward,—when the triune truths of the Transfiguration, the Resurrection, and the Ascension answered each other,—then Peter proved the "Rock" indeed, large and steadfast as those mountains themselves; and James and John spoke in deeds and words of "thunder," that have not ceased to reverberate from those sacred summits. James was early put to the sword for his faithful testimony; John cites the Transfigura-

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tion in the opening of his Gospel, "We beheld His Glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father"; and Peter even more clearly refers to it; "This voice we heard when we were with Him in the Holy Mount." And all three alike, in "the power of an endless life," were "faithful unto death" in their testimony to the truth of the risen, ascended, glorified, and now forever transfigured Christ.

The whole scene was one to impress the disciples' memory. There was the visible glory and the audible voice. And there were the great departed in the glorified body,—the sainted of other days,—in practical affirmation of immortality, in Heavenly demonstration that "the dead still live," that "all live unto Him."

But, dear brethren, the chief significance of the scene was the light it shed on the person of Christ.

When Leonardo da Vinci had finished his famous picture of the Last Supper, he invited a friend to see it. "Exquisite," exclaimed the visitor, "that wine-cup seems to stand out from the table like solid glittering silver." The great artist quietly took up a brush and blotted out the Cup. "I meant," he said, "the figure of Christ should be the foremost object to the observer." So when the accessories of the event had vanished,—when the bright cloud whose shadow, even, was luminous, had lifted, and Moses and Elijah were invisible,

the vision of the glorified Christ filled the disciples' eye,—“they saw no man save Jesus only.”

And Christ is ever the one Central Figure before the religious faculty of Man. The moral sense and spiritual perception have indeed other subjects for contemplation: the being, attributes, and laws of God; the nature, duty, and destiny of man; moral distinction, spiritual communion, supernatural revelation, and future life;—these and like themes arrest and occupy attention, and incite and satisfy interest. But in Christ all these themes are made one: God is made known, the relations and responsibility of the soul are disclosed, and life and immortality are brought to light.

The eye of the religious sight that in steady gaze of faith is uplifted and fixed upon Him, gains its highest conception of Godhead, and its deepest discernment of manhood, and their sacred and eternal relations. And it is souls, like the trio favoured of Christ, most gifted with deep intuitions of truth and true instincts of faith, that are ever readiest to see “Jesus only” as the one Central Object of their vision and devotion. And whoever would find assurance on the solemn questions of religious thought and hope must climb the heights of truth in the company and lead of Christ. In His companionship the summit of nature, the rugged ascents of knowledge and philosophy are but a background to bring out the more vividly luminous the one only object of absorbing interest. In His companion-

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ship, the inward ears, intellect, and conscience become acute to catch the "still small voice" as the Father's call, "This is My Beloved Son."

In His companionship, new light is reflected upon the Divine Law and the face of Moses shines anew with the glory of God. In His companionship, sacred prophecy is illumined, and Elijah's chariot of fire seems swinging again in mid-sky. In His companionship, Heaven and Earth seem to touch each other; the Past, Present, and Future commune together; and, ever, Jesus is the Central Figure,— "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." Amid the glorious disclosures of another world,—amid the revelation of eternal realities,—amid the surrounding of immortal presences, historic personages of the great dead alive forevermore,—amid the great and growing multitude whom no man can number of the blessed "dead that die in the Lord,"—"I know that my Redeemer Liveth" . . . "and mine eyes shall behold Him and not another."

The Transfiguration was a typical experience.

Peter, James, and John were privileged to witness it because in spiritual faculty and its development they were somewhat capable of it. No such summit is ever gained at a bound. The long, sloping ascent that lies between must be climbed.

"The heights by such men reached and kept
Were not attained at single flight;
But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upward in the night."

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These three it would seem alone of the Apostles, when the great opportunity came to them, were prepared and prompt to improve it. But their promptness sprang from a close personal attachment to their Master; and their preparation was their past constant companionship with Him. So when He said, "Let us go up yonder," they were on hand, and in heart to do it. They were ready for the evening prayer-meeting, even though only two or three, they themselves, should attend it. They felt they should be blest, for Christ would be in the midst.

And to all that are thus ready there is a voice that speaks demonstrably to the heart. Thus it was with Abram, when he heard God call him to institute a nation and a faith, "and he saw Christ's day and was glad." Thus it was with Jacob, when he saw a ladder from earth to heaven, and the Angels of God ascending and descending upon it. Thus it was with Moses, on Horeb, when in the burning bush he first saw the glory of God. Thus it was with Elijah, when, on the same height, he learned that God is in the still small voice. Thus it was with the Hebrew children in the burning fiery furnace, when they saw with them the form of the fourth like unto the Son of God.

Thus it was with the shepherds of Bethlehem, when they heard Christ's Angel-convoy voicing the Hymn of the Nativity.

Thus it was with Simeon, when he uttered the

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THE FIRST OF THESE FOR WHICH THEY HAVE BEEN THEY
WAS WITH MARY ON THE RESUR-
RECTION MORNING, WHEN THE VOICE OF JESUS SPOKE HER
NAME, AND SHE FIRST SAW THE RISEN LORD.

THE SECOND WAS THE TWO OR THAT AFTERNOON WALK
TO THE MOUNT OF OLIVES, WHEN IT WAS MADE KNOWN IN THE
DISCOURSE THAT IT WAS WITH THE ASSEM-
BLY OF THE DISCIPLES ON THAT SUNDAY EVENING, WHEN
JESUS BLESSED THEM WITH A BENEDICTION OF
PEACE, AND THEN LED THEM AS FAR AS
BETHANY, WHERE HE WITNESSED HIS ASCENSION TO
HEAVEN. THE THIRD WAS WITH THE WAITING AND PRAY-
ING OF THE DISCIPLES AT PENTECOST, WHEN THEY EXPERIENCED
THE COMING OF THE HOLY GHOST.

THE FOURTH WAS THAT HEAVEN LIES
CLOSE TO US, "IN OUR INFANCY," BUT MOST OF
ALL IN OUR MATURED CHRISTIAN MANHOOD, AND OUR
GROWING MANLY STATURE. IT BECAME VISIBLE IN AN-
DREW'S PRAYER, AND HIS SERVANT SAW "THE
HEAVENS OPENED, AND HORSES AND CHARIOTS OF FIRE." IT
CAME VISIBLE TO ISAIAH, WHEN COMMISSIONED AS A
PROPHET OF GOD, AND THE ANOINTING SERAPH "TOUCHED
HIS LIPS WITH A LIVE COAL FROM OFF THE ALTAR." IT
CAME VISIBLE TO EZEKIEL, WHEN "THE SPIRIT ENTERED
HIM, AND HE SAW "THE LIVING CREATURES RUN
ABOUT AS A FLASH OF LIGHTNING," AND THERE "AP-
PEARED THE LIKENESS OF THE GLORY OF THE LORD." IT
CAME VISIBLE TO STEPHEN WHEN "FULL OF THE HOLY
SPIRIT," HE SAW THE SAME GLORY AND "JESUS STANDING
AT HIS RIGHT HAND OF GOD." IT BECAME VISIBLE TO

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John on Patmos, when “in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day” he saw “in the midst of the golden candlesticks, One like unto the Son of man.”

And thus it ever is. These Scripture citations are indeed exceptional in degree, but not in kind. Whether the precious season comes to a lone soul, or to two, or three, or larger groups, or entire churches,—in all the varied experience the one condition prevails: The receptive state is the spiritual frame. All who have been with Him from the beginning will have things to witness potent and precious to strengthen and comfort themselves and others. Souls that enjoy an everyday walk with the Saviour sometimes climb with Him to Hermon-Heights. And souls that love to be with Him in prayer are often exalted to sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus.

On this principle Christ calls His ministers to sit in Moses’ seat, to wear Elijah’s mantle, to feel the shadow of Peter, to walk in the footsteps of Paul. On this principle Christ calls His churches: Offer the Gospel to house or heart,—if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it,—and whatsoever town shall welcome Christ’s messengers, thither He will come to dwell. On this principle the churches choose their delegations: they are not chosen at random, and seldom in rotation. Your choice, dear associates here, is a reward of merit. It is the working members of the churches that are fitted for such high privilege, and can suitably im-

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prove the precious opportunity. And may this meeting have a special blessing for every delegate.

But finally, High and rare experiences are of little value unless they Prepare us the better to fulfil the Homely Duties of Every Day.

The very next morning Christ led His disciples down from the Mount; and they found themselves plunged at once into the midst of the sorrow and suffering of this sin-cursed world; and felt a demand made upon them to share the burdens of their fellow-beings, and at least by sympathy to attempt to relieve them. The exalted experience of the Transfiguration was confronted by the tragic anguish of the heart-broken father with his afflicted son wallowing, foaming in the cruel clutches of disease and evil.

Was there not a profound lesson intended by the juxtaposition of these two incidents? "How beautiful upon the mountains, are the feet of him that bringeth good-tidings, that publisheth peace,"—Yea, infinitely beautiful, when those footsteps descend from heights of personal opportunity and spiritual enduement and hasten into the valleys of agony to bring hope to the despondent, trust to the despairing, faith to the blaspheming, and Christ's life-potency of love to lift up the fallen and to lead back the lost.

"Why could we not do it?" "This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." After that

night on the mount, Peter, James, and John might have been able to do it; but they too had been heavy with sleep through a part of the scene. Nor had they yet learned the full purport of their experience,—that a part of its purpose was the better to work and to serve.

And this is ever a hard lesson to learn. The rich are slow to feel that they are stewards of God's goods for His poor; the strong, that they are entrusted with resources to strengthen the feeble; the gifted that their talents are dutiable in behalf of the simple; the learned and experienced, that they are debtors to the unwise and the ignorant, "barbarian, Scythian, bond, and free."

It is indeed difficult and disagreeable to come down from the mount. Peter, happy, enraptured, and enthusiastic, wished to build tabernacles and abide there. But Christ at once brought him down,—down into the very depths of human extremity and wretchedness, where anguish and despair were reaching up needy hands for help. Sometimes the pastor in his comfortable study, lifted up in thought, is overshadowed with some unwonted brightness of truth, and catches a new glow on the face of Christ, never conceived before. Oh, it is then that, instead of becoming a monk of the study, he should come forth to the people, luminous with the truth and with face shining like that of Moses when he came down from the Mount. It was when Stephen was about to preach before the Sanhedrin that sermon

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that converted Saul, that "all that sat in the Council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been: the face of an angel." It was when Peter and John were on the way to the Temple that they cured the cripple at the gate Beautiful,—and they entered with them into the Temple, walking and jumping and praising God."

There is a legend of a devout hermit, who, in a cave, one day saw a glory as of the Son of God, and he went out of his cell. Just then there was a knock at the door—a call to some homely duty,—and he went out. It was a summons to the bedside of a dying man to minister consolation to the dying in a village house out on the hills. "Oh," thought the hermit, "I cannot go,—how can I withdraw my eyes from this glorious sight?" But he obeyed the call of duty and went and performed the work. And when he returned, the glory still shone in his eyes, and a voice spoke to him saying, "Had you stayed here I had gone hence; but you did your duty and I have awaited your return and Lo, I am with you always."

This old legend is often made real. From a late *Harvard* paper "The Problem of the Poor," I find the following copied in *The Congregationalist*: A man is very ill and just out of jail; a benevolent Christian visits him, and brings help and hope and the promise of work; the poor man tells the story: "I looked at him, an' it seemed to me something like that which had frozen me all up inside melted that minute;

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I burst out crying and couldn't help it. An' then down he was on his knees a-prayin' for me 'Dear Lord, here is Thy child, make him know it to-night.' . . . A sense of God came into me then, an' it never left me."

We are here, brethren, on this height of privilege. Let the light we get be reflected on our work,—and our lives be "lights in the world holding forth the word of life."

IX

THE VILLAGE CHURCH

(Preached at the Dedication of the Church in Peace Dale)

"Now Jacob's well was there."—JOHN iv. 6, 1st clause.

"And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."—REVELATION xxii. 17, last clause.

ONE of God's noblemen of old, it is implied in this record, digged a well; and it remained a perennial fountain of refreshment both to his own household and to a whole people. It blessed centuries; fifty generations slaked their thirst from its unfailing depths; and at last Christ, weary with a journey, rested at its curb and was refreshed with its coolness in the high heat of noon.

A rare interest attaches to the simple statement: "NOW JACOB'S WELL WAS THERE."

It has been said that History is Philosophy teaching by Example. As a parallel statement, sacred biography is instruction in religion by object teaching. There is a suggestiveness in the Inspired History only less instructive than its express precepts and direct doctrines. And this incident in the text, concerning an ancient worthy and his work, may, accordingly, serve the purpose of prompting appropriate thought on such an occasion as the dedication of a church.

For a short time, then, your attention is invited to the importance of a permanent public work, and the power for good in a House of God.

I

A work which in its nature and design is public and permanent is always invested with a special interest. The opening of the Providence water-works created a holiday, and it shall remain a standing festival and recreation. From a well by the wayside, to an aqueduct that supplies water to a metropolis,—from a district school that teaches the rudiments, to the University that conducts to the summit of the hill of science,—any public enterprise and permanent beneficence excites unusual attention, and is entitled to general esteem.

As a first test of worth in measuring the value of such a work it is certain that its importance is according to the moral Truth that is wrought into it.

Says Ruskin: "There are some faults, light in the sight of love; some errors slight in the estimate of wisdom; but Truth forgives no insult and tolerates no stain. I would have the Lamp of Truth clear in the hearts of our artists and handicraftsmen." And what this art-critic says of architecture is especially applicable to that moral plan which lies back of the outward fact. A builder has a draft in thought, a frame-work of aim before he gives it real form. If a false ornament in ma-

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terial building, as this writer earnestly asserts, "is an imposition, a vulgarity, an impertinence, and a sin," how much more is a falsehood in the moral design that first shapes a work. If it is important that there be no pretence in constructive art, it is indispensable that there be no deception in an ostensible design. What is intended for a speculation should not purport to be a beneficence, and what is really an ostentation may not pass for a charity,—if it does, it is a cheat,—if it tries, it is a lie. To open a lecture course so as to defraud and corrupt the people; to found a public school with the tuition at a figure that writes over its doors "no admission to the masses"; to manage a so-called Christian church as a speculation in pew rentals, so that no longer "to the poor the Gospel is preached," giving the lie to Christ;—all this is to extinguish the Lamp of Truth. These buildings, halls, schools, and churches, may blaze with brilliant chandeliers, but it is that glare worse than darkness that blinds the damned. Charities have been supported from the proceeds of robberies,—hospitals from licenses for the sale of liquors. And those more civilized highwaymen, certain railroad kings, found seats of learning and even churches,—as if Divine Vengeance were a Cerberus to be baited with a sop, or they could bribe God!

Without the element of truth, the grandest structure of public enterprise is but "wood, hay, stubble," to crackle to ashes when tried by the fire.

There is a moral structure going up, builded invisibly by every individual. A worthy study is the architecture of character. Each outward act will be modeled after this draft, and should *appear* what it *is*,—a buttress to the spiritual structure. A deed of truth is doubly so when known to have the force and support of a system,—when the external consists with the interior, joined and mortised into the whole frame-work of the soul.

Some men's lives read like illuminated missals. Each deed, and the sum of the whole, utters and commends the truth,—in social relations, sincerity; in business transactions, integrity; in deeds of beneficence and charity, reality and sacrifice.

Another criterion, in estimating values in action, is that the importance of a work is proportioned to the practical good to be wrought out by it.

The charm which invests Jacob's well does not consist in its mere antiquity. The work was indeed already classic with olden associations; but it was hallowed only as a standing blessing. The column of curbstone stood a monument of the past; but the well of water had been in all those years an active beneficence, and would still endure for an indefinite period a perpetual philanthropy.

A well is neither a rare nor a great work; and where one gets honourable mention in sacred history, a myriad others as good have provided for the same want as constantly in communities no more obscure and circumscribed, and supplied many a

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cup of cold water in the name of a disciple to the wearied Christ. A work does not depend upon its rareness nor greatness for its intrinsic value. The pyramid of Cheops is so large that one hundred of our largest churches set in a hollow square would scarcely suffice for the outer course of the base; but the emotion one must experience on viewing the Egyptian Pyramids is pitiful in comparison with that felt at just the thought of the little cradle of rushes which within their shadow rocked the infant Prophet on the river. Those mighty piles, as mausoleums or monuments, are an exaggeration and a mockery. They are a caricature of sacrifice, a stupendous expression of pride. As works of art they have no significance of utility,—they are a gigantic toy. As memorials they have failed; planned by vanity they stand as massive tombstones over unknown and nameless Pharaohs; but that little basket plaited by love, though so trifling and perishable, not only answered its purpose as the salvation of a life, but floated freedom for a people, cradled a nation, perpetuated a faith.

To a few come rare opportunities for usefulness, and the opportunity is responsibility; it is a mission; it is a mandate. The gift of brain makes a demand upon the heart. Responsive to the force of thought there should be throbs of love. The skill and the genius that invented the sewing machine,—the patience, the almost inspiration of perseverance that discovered the process of vulcanizing rubber,—

the broad prudence that builds up a fabulous fortune by banking,—the iron energy that sends locomotives across the continent and ships across the sea as easily as a weaver with a hand-loom throws his shuttle,—all these commit to Howe and Wilson and Goodyear and Peabody and Vanderbilt some further work than merely to serve the ends of self. It is a grand opportunity, but no less a great obligation,—it is a rare privilege, but as well a real duty. The ability to be rich is a gift, and the money thus got is a trust-fund from God. Wherever there are prosperous mills there should be respectable schools and creditable churches. The terms of toil should alternate with terms of study; and six days of labour should be succeeded by fitting privileges on the seventh. An only daughter is dashed from her carriage and suddenly killed in New York City, and her doting father puts her whole fortune into carved and sculptured marble in Greenwood. But to sensible people it has the glare and glitter of vanity and vulgarity, and they pass it by to avoid an oppressive sense of pity or contempt. A bright boy prematurely dies in a University town, and his sorrowing parents establish to his memory a Library of Reference in the Theological Seminary; and to thoughtful persons it is an expression of the sentiments of humanity and sacrifice, and they pause there, with admiration and gratitude, to breathe the air that seems filled with the spirit of a benediction. One might



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even choose to die young to leave such a deed in his name,—nay, rather, to live to old age to make the legacy more effectual, and to complete in person such a work.

But it is not the rich alone who can do nobly,—the chances are rather against them, that they will fail of their proportion. John Pounds and Robert Raikes had the lot of labour and poverty; but out of love for the little ones and pity for the ignorant they opened schools, and in so doing founded institutions that have flowed as perennial fountains opened in God's House and springing up continuously out of Christian hearts. And such a deed is not merely reproduced in kind. It has the power of propagating varieties. There is in ideas and moral action provision for the origin of species and for a progressive evolution. In the year 1700 a few poor ministers of Connecticut, learned and devoted, brought together a contribution of books with the dedicatory formula: "*I give these books to found a collegiate school in this colony.*" And not only have those books multiplied into a library of nigh a hundred thousand volumes, but have changed their form into cabinet and laboratory collections; and the humble pastor's study where the gift was made in the interest of sacred and ancient learning has unfolded into a score of imposing structures where in addition are taught the modern languages, the sciences, and the arts. And not only so, but the school that soon became a college and

now a university has planted academies and colleges all over our land,—and, a hundred-fold more widely in posts of trust, her sons are bringing forth fruit, because under her influence they were imbued with the spirit of usefulness—"the genius of the place." Ideas are seeds, deeds are germs. But it is not only the large works that are great. Souls have lived unknown,—single words have been spoken that cannot be traced to their source,—silent thoughts have flowed pure and clear into the chalice of anonymous volumes that, full of love to others, have proved cups of refreshment forever, drawn from depths that Christ's truth alone can open in the soul, "wells of water springing up into everlasting life."

II

Such thoughts and feelings are readily suggested as we dedicate this edifice. It is in the sixteenth year of the history of the church that its House of Worship is finished. We give it to Christ as a faint type, a dim picture of the New Jerusalem, come down adorned as a Bride for Her Husband. We present it to Him that by His help it may prove a power for good, a true House of God. Built for the public benefit and intended for continuous usefulness, it confides in the Divine blessing, and hopes to be received with favour by the people. May it have from its very opening the radiance of coming

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successes and possibilities. And after years and centuries of efficient operation it shall, in addition to this halo of hope, have the glory of a history. Even to-day we do not see it as an isolate entity, detached from the past and independent of the future, but view it as one grand whole, a living fact and force clothed in its accomplishments and adorned with its capabilities and expectations. Designed and adapted to be of general and lasting good, it is lifted to a height in our thought and hope where the Past, the Present, and the Future commune together as in a Transfiguration. Moses is here with his written tables,—what is *done*; Elijah with his prophecy ever looking forward,—what is *to do*; and Christ Himself the central figure in the scene, representing the present with its active service and sacrifice,—His Life that ever *does*.

Peter in that vision on the Mount felt such enthusiasm that he knew not what he said. We trust the Master approves the impulse and the earnestness with which we set up this tabernacle.

And there is a hint, in this impulse, at one element in the power for good there is, in a house of God. The edifice is an expression of devotion. It is a hymn and a prayer in timber and stone. It is a silent religious service constantly solemnized, and the great congregation is the whole community. From matins to vespers its masses are repeated in the audience of the people. From morning to evening and from evening to morning its uplifted

cross outlined upon the sky publishes the Gospel,—that “God so loved the world.” There are “sermons in (these) stones.” From the corner-stone to the topmost in the turret, they are eloquent and fervent with the word of God. The open portals, the illuminated missals, the symbolled windows, the skyward spire, and the outstretched arms of the cross speak to the eye, as the hourly clock-stroke and the stated Sabbath-peal plead to the ear,—a call to prayer.

The stranger visiting the place and the passer-by each day cannot mistake this building for a barn nor a bank, a factory nor an academy, a counting-room nor a boarding-house. Busy mills tell of enterprise; well-patronized schools speak of intelligence; tasteful homes manifest refinement; but a house of worship,—this church home,—indicates piety, makes it known that God has a people in the place, Christ a church.

And the character of such a structure must reveal in some degree the quality of the piety. It will expose pride or parsimony and it may express devotedness and sacrifice. If either of these are wrought into the building, they will appear. There may be excess in plainness and in ornamentation. The one does not always indicate humility,—it is often stinginess; and the other does not necessarily manifest vanity,—it can be rather generosity and consecration. Says Ruskin, in the “Seven Lamps of Architecture”: “The Lamp of Sacrifice

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prompts to the offering of precious things, merely because they are precious, not because they are useful or necessary. . . . Costliness (is) generally a condition of the acceptableness of a sacrifice. . . . There was but one reason (for the glory of the ancient Temple, as for the beauty of modern churches) and that an eternal one,— . . . that gratitude to Him and continual remembrance of Him might have at once their expression and their enduring testimony in the presentation to Him, . . . of all treasures of wisdom and beauty,—of the thought that invents and the hand that labours, of wealth of wood and weight of stone. . . .

“It has been said—and it ought always to be said, for it is true—that a better and more honourable offering is made to our Master in ministry to the poor, . . . Assuredly it is so; woe to all who think that any other kind or manner of offering may in any wise take the place of this. Do the people need places to pray and calls to hear God’s word? Then it is no time for smoothing pillars and carving pulpits; let us have enough first of walls and roofs. Do the people need teaching from house to house, and bread from day to day? Then they are deacons and ministers we want, not architects. I insist on this, I plead for this; but let us examine ourselves and see if this be indeed a season for backwardness in the lesser work of building and beautifying a church. The question is not between God’s house and His poor; it is not

between God's house and His gospel. It is between God's house and ours. Have we no colours on our floors? . . . No gilded furniture in our chambers? Has even the tithe of these been offered? They are, or they ought to be, the signs that enough has been devoted to the great purposes of human stewardship, and that there remains to us what we can spend in luxury. But there is a greater and a prouder luxury than this selfish one—that of bringing a portion of such things as these into sacred service; and presenting them for a memorial that our pleasure as well as our toil has been hallowed by the remembrance of Him who gave both the strength and the reward. The tenth part of the expense which is sacrificed in domestic vanities, would, if collectively offered and wisely employed, build a marble church for every town,—such a church as it should be a joy and a blessing even to pass near in our daily ways and walks, and as it would bring the light into the eyes to see from far, lifting its fair height above the purple crowd of humble roofs.”¹

When the Jews commended to Christ a centurion because he had builded them a synagogue, our Saviour indicated His appreciation by healing his servant. Recent excavations at Capernaum have discovered a marble structure containing an altar, and carved Hebrew inscriptions upon the remaining wall. There is strong argument of probability that

¹ “Beauties of Ruskin,” pp. 122-3.

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this is the synagogue built by the devout Roman Captain.

When Judas grudged his Lord the costly offering with which the devoted Mary anointed His feet, Jesus accepted and commended the sacrifice; and the evangelist significantly adds that Judas "was a thief and carried the bag." Ah! and since him, many a professed follower, because he carries the bag, has practised stinginess in the name of charity, and feigned benevolence to the poor as an excuse for grudging giving in the house of God!

The fact is, offerings to the Lord are the best representative of all the rest. Wherever you see a church gone to decay, you will find all charities and benevolences as shabbily managed. It is they who are most faithful in maintaining the ordinances of the Gospel, that are most to be relied on for generosity in every right object, and above all for benevolent contributions to the poor.

And this leads to our last thought: there is Power for Good in a House of God, because it is a means for promoting every good cause.

A church were of little worth were it only a work of art,—a model in architectural æsthetics. To be sure, there is a civilizing and refining influence in the beautiful, and "a thing of beauty is a joy forever." But let it be the least that shall be said of this house, that it is built in good taste. It is more that it is builded of a good motive. It is much that it shall be for generations and centuries

a standing evidence of Christian sacrifice, and a silent testimony to Christian truth; but let it be most that it is a means for continuous Christian activity, put to constant Christian use. Within these walls, twice and three times a week, gathers a company of Christian communicants with their families, and with other friends of the cause of Christ. From fifty to one hundred and fifty set addresses are annually delivered upon moral and religious themes—the loftiest and most important that can engage the immortal mind. Regular collections are taken of contributions made for objects of benevolence near and far. Every week the children are gathered in and instructed in the word of God by teachers who are faithful in gratuitous services from love of the work.

Now this support of the Gospel—this preaching of sermons, these Sabbath assemblies, these charitable contributions, and these Sunday Schools—is useful to the community, inestimable for the highest necessities of society.

If this church shall prove the great good which to its projectors, its contributors, and builders has been the pleasure of hope and the strength of toil, it will be because you make it so. Many of you have laid stones or placed timbers in this building,—let us all do *something* also to build up the spiritual structure which it is our labour and life to edify in Christ, the corner stone. The apostles were called “pillars of the church”; I would that the

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spiritual edifice we are erecting here might be surrounded by a colonnade of polished columns, of character and texture without spot and mar; and that as this house has an entrance on every side, so the invisible building might be encircled with a portico opening in every direction, inviting the passer-by and all who are outside, to enter in and be blest. "The Spirit and the Bride say come, and let him that heareth say come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Oh, write it over all your doors, in large letters that may be read far out upon the road by the weary and the thirsty traveller and by the famishing and the dying by the wayside,—letters that are gilded and luminous with the light of God,—“Come,”—“Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out,” “Come,”—“Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden,”—“Come,”—“and I will give you rest,”—“the Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come.’” The voices of God and His church are in solemn accord, in this welcome Gospel-call. The Holy Spirit and a hallowed people in sweet and chiming peal prolong the gladsome Sabbath-call. From out the belfry of heaven, it is sounding, in inviting vibrations, the solemn summons, Come; and from the towers of the church, 'tis responsively ringing, repeating, prolonging the call, Come, Come. And the peals from the skies and from the earth blend in one chime, Come, Come, Come.

My friends, it is a blessed privilege to be put in

trust with the water of life,—to be made a source of its supply to society,—to stand like the well at Sychar by the wayside with the free offering of refreshment and rest to men. “Now Jacob’s well was there.” May this church continue on duty, with fidelity—a well of the water of life—that it may become historic and be recorded that “Jesus, therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well”; that He, in the person of those with whom He identified Himself,—“the least of His brethren,”—the thirsty, the weary, the heavy-laden, and the way-worn, faint from work or journey, *may rest by it, and lean upon it, and be refreshed freely.* What a history of fidelity, “Now Jacob’s well was there.” And what a mission of philanthropy. “Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life.” Oh, as a church, may we be indeed a well of water springing up into everlasting life; by the conduits of prayer in direct communication with the fountain that is opened in the house of David. So standing at our post, with this inscription over-arching us all, may we know that whenever any weary and thirsty one finds rest here, it is as if “Jesus . . . sat thus on the well.” For He has said: “I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink.” “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.”

X

THE PRINCE AND THE PEOPLE

"Which things are an allegory."—GALATIANS iv. 24.

IN the olden time, so long ago that its founding and earliest history are immemorial, there existed a kingdom distinguished at once for the extent of its domain and the benevolence of its great king.

Now this king had an only son after his own heart and well pleasing to the father, because moved by the same kindly spirit toward the subjects.

Indeed the love of the crown prince for the people excited the wonder of the courtiers round the throne; and one of the state ministers whom he sent into his principedom to announce his coming, when about to assume the government in person, proclaimed that his name should be called "Wonderful."

There were many embassies appointed to instruct his people, before his arrival, that the purpose of his coming was to carry out among them a great project of beneficence. The journals and proclamations of these ambassadors have been carefully preserved in the archives of the principedom, and copies of them, both in the native tongue and in

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translation are extant, in our own time, alike in his own royal house and in the humblest homes. And such is the interest of these writings, beyond that of mere history, and beyond their antiquity, that like the prince himself, and like his gracious enterprise, even the "testimonies" concerning them have been called wonderful.

At length he came, in the fulness of time, as proclaimed. And his advent was with simple yet royal state. There was a retinue and music from the father's presence; but no popular acclaim to welcome him to his realm. But from the first he won the hearts of his subjects. Gradually indeed, yet steadily, they yielded him loyalty and allegiance. It had been declared that kings should come to the brightness of his rising, and that unto him should the gathering of the people be. And accordingly royal scholars from afar and humble toilers nigh at hand,—those who studied the stars, and those who tended their flocks,—hastened to lay their gifts or to bend the knee at his feet.

The prince himself brought great resources, an inheritance from his father who, still living, had committed all things to his hands, of his own good pleasure. Indeed the father originated the plan and sent his son as the executor of his will; for he knew his son, and none but the son knew the father; and both were of one mind and heart. And the revenues of the realm, as the subjects began to catch the spirit of the prince, and to understand his

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high design, were ever as they increased, freely contributed to promote the gracious purpose.

The grand scheme proposed to rebuild the homes of all the inhabitants, to open schools in every community, and to establish infirmaries for the disabled and the bereaved.

The noble prince, entering upon his office according to the written instrument, read from the ancient record, announced his royal design to the people, and published in the assembly the glad tidings of his father's last will and testament. Verily the testator and the executor had at heart the welfare and happiness of the whole land.

The generous instrument made the people joint heirs with the prince. And the legacies were assured upon two simple conditions: (1) that each legatee come into sympathy with the spirit of the giver and cultivate a similar grace; and (2) that each assist his neighbours to come to their inheritance as partakers of the royal nature.

Thus was the great beneficence founded. Oh, happy subjects of such a father's regard. Oh, favoured country chosen of his son! Blessed are the people with whom he dwelt in person! What an advantage had they, to whom was committed this first knowledge of the will!

But the prince entered not upon his estate without a conflict. There was a division among the people because of him. It is a strange fact, one to be explained only on the ground of a perverse

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disposition,—the irrational enmity of a deranged nature,—that some declined with indifference, and others rejected with contempt the rich legacy provided for them, being of a spirit to dislike the conditions. Among these who scorned the prince and scoffed at his proclamations were many who meantime enjoyed the external benefits of the royal munificence, denying the consciousness of their indebtedness or refusing to confess it.

The prince himself illustrated the situation, by relating a story of a landholder who leased an estate to strangers. The messengers whom he sent to collect the revenues were shamefully treated. And the son and heir, when he came, was put to death. Such was the case with the prince. Those who owed all to him persecuted his ambassadors and inflicted unutterable sufferings upon himself.

But when they thought they had carried out their plot and brought his cause to naught, it was then that he rose to his highest triumph. His life was too great to be holden of the grave. He was a victor even over death. The very sacrifice he had made only glorified his name and deepened and redoubled the devotion of those who from the outset espoused his claim, and those who afterward owned him as their liege. For in the division of the people because of him, it was the more noble who received the word with all readiness of mind; it was those who were of the truth that heard his voice as a personal call to join his cause. The common people

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heard him gladly; and the candid confessed that he spake as one having authority. And the few soon grew into a multitude, thronging from throughout the province, from rural hamlet and central capital, an elect and ever-enlarging company, accepting the offered legacy for themselves and their descendants, and entering upon the inestimable inheritance.

These were thereby constituted a benevolent society. By the spirit of their princely leader, and by virtue of their possession they became an institution to extend the royal munificence. And the duties thus devolving upon them, the legacy itself gave them the power to discharge. They were moved as with an inspiration by their very calling. They felt themselves readily in sympathy with the father's royal purpose and the son's princely sacrifice; and, ennobled by the spirit of both, they generously interested themselves to secure a full portion to every legatee of all the joint-heirs contemplated in the will.

And the domain of the great prince proved to be vastly larger than seemed at first proclaimed. On his departure to his native clime and his father's home, he announced a codicil to the will, extending its benefits to whosoever would receive them, and instructing his agents to publish its provisions to every creature. So inexhaustible are the resources in the father's possession and at the son's disposal! So in excess of all possible outlay forever, is the income of his limitless estate! And so may all the

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sons of men become heirs of this grace, and joint-heirs with the crown prince, who, the first born and only son, in infinite condescension made known himself as the elder brother, and made known the great king as the common father of the adopted, newly ennobled, and now royal line,—the whole family of man.

Already, over a large portion of his dominion, by the liberal provisions of the will, the homes of men are rebuilt after the father's model. Houses that had fallen into ruin, so sadly dilapidated as to expose rather than shelter the ignorance and wretchedness that dwelt in them, have been replaced, upon this foundation, with new and noble abodes that protect the happy households from injury and anxiety. Where before stood the ugly hovel, the dwelling of discontent and superstition, where fear shivered and passion stormed and blasphemy crashed among the rafters, now stands the pleasant cottage, the home of concord and content, the abode of devotion and delight; and the voice of prayer and praise ascends to the skies. And instead of the unsightly castle battered with many an attack and frowning hostility from its battlements, within whose rude walls brutality was sheltered and bred, now rises the hospitable mansion where generosity and philanthropy abide and the liberal heart deviseth liberal things.

Yes! alike in cottage and mansion, by favour of the noble testator, dwell the heirs of the riches of

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his grace, lifted to a true independence above the fear of want or death,—freed from the corroding care of life in the serene possession of that wealth which is without a pang of memory or a sting of remorse.

The most pleasant social relations prevail among the people. No vain pride nor arrogance of superiority finds place where the one standard of manhood is personal character, and the only patent of nobility is the humble and helpful spirit. By the grace of the prince, in his kingdom, through all its community, a man ranks not for where he stands, nor for what he owns, but for how he does and what he is. All society is on a level,—but it has been levelled upward. And every post is of the same high place, and every life of one true worth when it counts for man, when it tells for God.

And the kindly intercourse and blessed fellowship based on common sympathies and pursuits, include the society and converse of the dispenser of the bounty himself. The great and generous prince often visits in the homes of the happy subjects of the royal father's regard, and his own princely grace. Ah! well were it, could every one keep conscious of his nearness, welcome his coming, and find pleasure in his presence. Is it a pleasing prospect, dear brother, to know that to-morrow he will visit you in your place of business? Have you a serene conscience in the certainty that he will audit your accounts? On your way home is your converse or

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meditation such that your heart would burn within you with his enkindling sympathy, should he join your company? At the daily meal, at the breaking of bread, is he made known by the mention of his name in saying a grace and asking his blessing on the repast? And in the family intercourse, is his hallowing influence turning the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers? Thus may you test whether you have secured this portion of your inheritance: a renewed home, where you would rejoice, as often as the prince should become your guest. Oh, there *are* hearts to whom this gladness is a hymn and a prayer:

"Abide with me, fast falls the eventide,
The darkness deepens, Oh, with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, still abide with me."

Another provision of the good father's will was the founding of schools, for the stated and steady instruction of adult and young in practical duty and the principles of truth.

And by the authority of the executor, accordingly, ample buildings, at convenient distances for general accommodation, adorn city and hamlet, hillside and valley; and twice or thrice in every seven days, and at special seasons daily, the inviting bell sounds the peal that calls to school; and the sound is taken up, and carried on from tower to spire, from dell

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to hill, till the crime is heard almost around the world! Thus the father and son are the founders and patrons of the foremost and most extensive of all institutions of learning.

Even the text-books were provided or prepared under the supervision of the same generous benefactor. They are sixty-six in number, and often bound in one volume or two, with the Author's name affixed to them; and as the compend of the most important knowledge, this series has maintained itself from the beginning, the constant and unchanged "reader" in these schools.

What more valuable study can there be than the philosophy of mind,—the science of the soul, in its lofty moral relations,—the knowledge of the conscience,—that science which is *con-science*, the knowledge of the inner nature, the profound principles of character? This study,—and it is an all-inclusive one,—is made the specialty in these institutions.

But above all the Author's works, even this highest one, is the study of the Author himself. Of all that was made known by the son, the most elevating and ennobling is the knowledge of the father. The result of such study is the highest culture, the education and development of character. It is the power of personal association with the best example, and familiar intercourse with the perfect pattern. It is this that in these seats of learning has produced, in such as most steadily attend on the in-

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struction and improve their opportunity, the truest and fairest instances of manhood and of womanhood. It is this that shows the good old text-book a masterpiece of knowledge and literature. The book is at once a work of science, a treatise on philosophy, a volume of history, and of biography; but all its truths and principles, its facts and characters, focalize their light upon the one *great life*. In the book, no teaching is abstract;—it is concrete as his attributes. And all the figures that are grouped in these pages, as on a wide-spread canvas, are subordinated to centre attention and absorb thought upon *him* the one theme of the revealing pen. *He* appears in the *frontispiece*,—"in the beginning *God*," and *he* reappears at the *finis*,—"even so come, Lord *Jesus*."

It is a goodly sight to see a whole community, maturity and youth, gathered stately to study and be taught in such a text-book. It is a happy thought to reflect that on this very day many millions of children are, in our own tongue, studying the same lessons and learning the same truths in this good book. Yes! and it is a yet grander fact that in every latitude and language, as the appointed morning dawns, a great procession moves, following the journeying day, from east to west, a thronging procession that lifts a mighty song: "Glory be to the Father," "Hosanna to the Son,"—going to school, never wearying with the reading of the will, hearing with new interest, the old, old story

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of the Father's goodness and His Beloved's grace; and the keynote of devotion sounds from nation to nation, and from meridian to meridian,—Old England sends it over the ocean to the shores of the New,—New England sends it on to the mid-land lakes and the Mississippi,—these waters glance it to the Sierras,—their cliffs re-echo it to the Pacific,—the coast glances it to the Sandwich Islands, whence the waters wave it on from island to island; onward to the continent whence it started,—where mission-stations sing the soft, sweet prelude to the grand coming anthem, when the teeming millions of China and all Asia shall take up the song of praise to the Great King and His Mighty Prince: "Lift up your heads, oh ye gates . . . and the King of Glory shall come in!" Yes! the worshippers that wend their way to the Royal Schools, on each sacred morning are stretching westward, one unending procession on one unceasing Sunday, and with one triumphant song, even here on earth.

"The congregations ne'er break up
And the Sabbaths have no end."

Lastly, this school of the church is the Alma Mater, the cherishing mother, of all noble charities.

This idea takes its date from the execution of the Will, and signalizes the era of the Deed. It is because the Father willed, and the Son executed His good pleasure, that the fairest and noblest charities, of complete appointment and adapted to every

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necessity of affliction or infirmity, are within the reach of all that need them.

This is the direct and legitimate result of the last Will and Testament, and the unmistakable product of the spirit and intent of the Good Prince. The great legacy bequeathed to mankind and the great Life that was devoted to secure its provisions to all whose names are written in the will, act upon the heirs of this grace as an incentive to apply wealth and labour and earnest lives to benefit their kind. The constant tendency of the great bequest, the execution of which cost the sacrifice of the princeliest Life that ever was lived, is to promote a similar devotion among men. It has created a new vocabulary in human language, and the old and well-worn words for home, hospital, asylum, and refuge, familiar before in a lower conception to the English, Roman, Grecian, and Jewish mind, stand for new ideas now. Those words of the Prince, "I was hungry,—thirsty,—naked, sick, and in prison,—and ye ministered unto me," have been as a summons to his followers, to go down among the humble and suffering, the unfortunate and the abandoned, to carry the mercy of the Friend of Sinners and the sympathy of the Lover of Souls; and lo! everywhere amid the busy rebuilding of homes, and the active instructing of the schools, are rising happy retreats for the destitute, the disabled, the invalid, the widow, the orphan, the aged, the insane, the deaf, the dumb, and the blind.

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Meantime, the millennium is not yet. There are habitations that are not homes; there are schools that contest the great Teacher; and instead of the institutions of charity, are the jail, prison, and penitentiary, and in a lower depth which makes need of these, the drinking saloons, the gambling dens, and those other pits of sin where the descending footsteps take hold on hell. From these habitations of cruelty the wails of the wretched are in shocking contrast with thankful family prayer; and from these finishing schools of crime, the ribald song and the accompanying "music's voluptuous swell" are in awful discord with the Sabbath sound of the organ, and the voice that praises God.

But were each town and state and nation,—were the whole race,—to become the kingdom of our Lord and His Anointed, it would soon dispense with court-houses, reformatories, and penitentiaries, with their endless expenses, annoyances, anxieties, and agonies. The costly safes and vaults that vainly attempt to guard the bonds and stocks of wealth and trade; the massive walls and granite cells that fail to environ the skilled and adept at guilt and crime; the prolonged procedures of courts and executions that oft make a farce of protecting society against the vicious and criminal,—these might be abolished, were but a tithe of the vast resources thus expended employed in the Royal Master's Cause.

Let all heirs of grace work to this end. Let the

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heads of the house be thoughtful and faithful and set a princely example in the home; let all the mature and advanced in the school, be constant and regular in attendance on its instructions, and help others to do it to the extent of their influence. And it is written in the Will, in its first draft and in its last form,—in this two-fold and doubly precious Testament,—your home shall be builded the very best, your children shall be schooled in the highest wisdom, and your charities shall return to you, imperishable treasures, an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. For this is written in the Father's Will and has the signature of His Son: "Ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you."

XI

MAN AND WIFE

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.

"Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.

"Children, obey your parents in all things; for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord.

"Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged."—COLOSSIANS iii. 18, 19, 20, 21.

THERE is an inspired wisdom evinced in the selection of these precepts, the *deference* of the wife; the *affectionateness* of the husband; the *obedience* of the child; the *considerateness* of the parent. The words are well weighed; the injunctions carefully chosen,—if indeed we can predicate deliberation or selection in precepts that are inspired. Humanly speaking we might imagine the Apostle pondering his expression, and with a view to the limits of his epistle, rejecting this precept and uttering that. But inspiration precludes the need, and with a Divine directness and conciseness equalled only in the two tables dictated by the same inspiration upon Sinai, it selects those directions which are best adapted to regulate the family. As *ten* commandments contain the law of morality for mankind, so *four* are sufficient to state in its completeness the code of the household.

Paul does not say, wives, love your husbands; that is taken for granted, with a silence which expresses more than any language can. To fail in this would be to fail in all that constitutes a woman a wife; and the very fact of being one pre-supposes that such a precept were not needed. Nor does Paul say, serve your husbands. That is inherent in the feminine nature. It constitutes largely the holy mission of woman and of wife. Her willing hands are ever busy to give comfort to her household. And no vigils can weary her patience, and no weariness exhaust her fathomless affection. But the precept of Paul is, Be subordinate. To love and to serve are a part of the essential significance of the word wife; but to submit needed a precept. And Paul taught that the husband should be the acknowledged head of the house, that when a question is to be decided his voice should be final. This banishes dispute, and secures peace; and therefore it is Christian or, as the language is, it is "*fit in the Lord.*"

But lest the acknowledged head should abuse his power, and exalt his authority into a petty despotism, Paul gives a corresponding precept to husbands: Love your wives, and be not bitter against them,—a precept which, in him who gives it obedience, will render unreasonableness impossible, and counteract the tendency to exacting conduct. The command is not, support your wives; that is involved in the very concept of being a husband.

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But the precept is, "be affectionate," with an affection whose atmosphere will not vibrate to reproachful words, and in which bitterness can not breathe and live.

The two precepts to husband and wife are thus mutual and complemental. And it is just to the degree that these precepts are correspondingly kept by a married pair that domestic peace is their constant guest and friend. Yielding is not essential to the relation of a wife as such. A really affectionate and faithful woman may feel naturally that submission is no more her duty than his. But the Scripture, silently appealing to the reasonableness that the one on whom the responsibilities of the household are heaviest, should have the deciding voice, places it merely on the ground of its Christian fitness, securing domestic peace. So affection, of course, is not the peculiar duty of the husband. But the sterner stuff which constitutes the masculine character, hardened yet more by the rough experiences of business relations, tends to bring man to consider affection as only a feminine sentiment, contemptible in men,—and tenderness, a sentimentality unworthy of manhood. Paul corrects this error so fatal to family happiness. How many thousands of households there are where joy and peace are strangers that never enter the gates, because the wife has not learned that brawling and browbeating are unwomanly; and the husband has not learned that exaction and arrogance are un-

manly. What a change would occur, were they mutually to agree,—she to exercise meekness and submissiveness, and he affection and tenderness.

There are a good many husbands who think that the precept to wives is all right: "Submit yourselves," but who give but little heed to the direction enjoined upon them. In family storms they get up the thunder and lightning,—their wives must be content to supply the showers—of tears. In fact, I think this is the case in the majority of family storms. It is always the case where the wife is pure-womanly, and the husband, pure-brute. There is more abuse and brutality hidden within the walls of home—concealed within the breasts of long-suffering and forgiving wives,—than the world without has ever heard of. If all the sorrows of the domestic circle could find a voice,—if all the suppressed sighs of disappointed and blighted affection with tendrils strained and torn but still undetached, were to breathe an audible breath,—if all the secret griefs that weep within in uncomplaining silence, were to seek sympathy,—if all the broken hearts—if all the quivering and bleeding sensibilities trampled upon and trodden out were to seek relief in a passionate outcry, the piercing sadness of it would appal the world.

Christianity comes to reconstruct and to restore; and the nearest approach to paradise possible to our frail hearts, our sinful dispositions, is the Christian

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home where there is obedience to these precepts of Paul, this code of God.

Holy Writ has cast a sanctity around the marriage relation by making it the symbol of the mystical union of Christ and His Church. When John on Patmos sought a worthy comparison for the love which Christ has for His people, and for the obedience of His true Church to their Lord, the words which he exalts with such high comparison are "Husband" on the one hand, and on the other, "the Bride, the Lamb's wife." Depend upon it, John was happily married. And I am just as sure that his wife was. You remember that Christ committed His mother to the care of John, with perfect confidence that in her declining years she would thus be an inmate of a happy home. Do any of you know of any kindred however near, or distant, much less any mere neighbour or acquaintance, to whom you would calmly entrust your feeble mother?

And when this John, this "Boanerges," yet the "Beloved disciple,"—this John, this "son of Thunder," in his strong, staunch, masculine character, yet "leaning on the Lord's bosom," as with wifely confiding and feminine tenderness,—when this John, in his own good old age, is inspired to write the Revelation, the final communication from the skies to which nothing may be added,—when he illustrates the spiritual oneness of Christ "the Head" and His "Household of Faith," it is more

than probable that his domestic experience had made the emblem expressive. Or, on the theory of plenary inspiration,—the theory that the words as well as the thoughts are inspired, that even the rhetoric is of heavenly revelation,—then the comparison carries a higher sanctity, as the Divine Ideal of husband and wife.

If every wife would yield to her husband with the honour and the reverence due to the head, as “is fit in the Lord,” and at the same time and to the same extent, every husband would be considerate and affectionate toward his wife;—in short if these two precepts of Paul,—precepts which should be as inseparable as the husband and wife themselves,—could be, by each, equally and reciprocally observed, there would be more happy homes than there are, and some restored Edens on this earth of ours. But when the wife, with a false pride of strong-mindedness, brawls and scolds to have her own will, or the husband, with a wrong assertion of his prerogative, scolds and browbeats to have his own way, they let in the devil to their paradise of happiness. And if there is anything in our homes now-a-days that had its fitting symbol in that old serpent, it must be the tongue that can clatter like a rattlesnake, and be more venomous.

My dear sir, did you marry your wife, so that by bitterness and brutality you might reduce her to the dispirited condition of a slave? And, you good woman, did you marry your husband because

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you despise him, and to show how you could unsex yourself by unsexing him?

Such an inversion of the natural order of things gets its penalty in the domestic wretchedness that attends it. No true husband will wish to humiliate his wife into abject servility to his every whim; nor will any true wife subject her husband to self-contempt, by constantly insisting on her "will." Many a husband has been made a "nobody" by his wife, by constant nagging until he has lost the pride of manly self-reliance; and the same treatment has made many another one of resentful nature, a petty but intolerable tyrant. So many a wife has been made a listless "good-for-nothing" by her husband's ceaseless fault-finding; and the same usage has made many another woman a perfect scold.

If the wife would strive to make her husband feel, when he steps into the doorway of home, that he there finds a refuge from care and anxiety,—that whatever others may say or think of him, or however ill he may be treated by his fellow-men in his business transactions, there is one group of human beings, his wife and children, who think him the best of men, it would tend very much to make him so, and help him easily to keep his part of this domestic code. If he comes home despondent, such esteem will give new nerve to his arms, such love will infuse fresh spirit into his heart. Likewise, if the husband would so love his wife that she finds her truest pleasure in his society and

conversation, so that, after every absence, the sound of his returning feet upon the doorstone beats time to the music of a happy tune that starts into singing in her soul at every thought of him, it would tend very much to make her all the woman he could wish, and just what he thought her when he asked for her hand. And under such treatment she would find it easy to keep her part of this code for the home.

I am not giving expression to sentimentality, but the very principles of happiness. What is life worth, what is the value of marriage, if not for the pursuit of happiness and the cultivation of character? Shall we live from morning till night, and to-morrow repeat the wretched day, and contribute nothing, either to our own comfort or the happiness of our companions? That were a treadmill existence most miserable. Love will sometimes be wounded. Human nature is frail; but at such times, as soon as the calmer mood comes, let both remember that nothing is more manly or more womanly than, having done a wrong, to set it right, by special kindness; or, having suffered a wrong, to set it right by cordial forgiveness. Divorce not the two precepts; let them be as inseparable as your lives. It is in the equal keeping of the two that the domestic happiness is secured. "Wives, submit yourselves unto your husbands"; "Husbands, love your wives."¹

¹ Mr. Fisher was an advocate of woman suffrage. See p. 197.

X

PARENT AND CHILD

AN EXPANDED SERMON

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord."

"Fathers, provoke not your children to anger: lest they be discouraged."—COLLOSSIANS III. 20, 21.

IN this part of the code for the home, there is a Divine logic that is as remarkable as the mutual relation of the precepts themselves. The reasoning, we may well believe, is not simply Paul's but God's. Such arguments can only be got by glimpses into interior truth. The reason given for filial obedience is because it "is well-pleasing unto the Lord." There is no human relation more unquestionably of Divine appointment than that of parent and child; and among all the final causes, or God's reasons, which can be discovered in the existing system of things, few are clearer than this, that the helplessness of childhood,—a period more prolonged in the human young than in brutes,—was intended to secure the better parental control of the child. Subordination to the parent, therefore, is obedience to the Creator. As parenthood is the Divine agency to train immortals for God, so filial

dutifulness under such nurture must be "well-pleasing unto the Lord."

But the same wisdom which lays down this law for the offspring, immediately limits the authority of the parent, by giving to him a corresponding, or complemental, precept. That Divine kindness which, in writing a rule for children, accompanies it with encouragement,—the "commandment with promise,"—teaches thus by example, as well as by the special precept to parents, that they are to be kindly and considerate toward their children, not to awaken resentment by untimely rebuke or to excite anger by passionate punishment. "Ye fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged." God *encourages* with promise, you are not to *discourage* by provocation.

Much is said of the debt of gratitude which is due from children to parents,—and there is a debt indeed which nothing can ever repay, and which nothing short of the truest honour and the completest obedience can ever approach. The mother's love which suffers and agonizes for the child,—which with unutterable tenderness watches over his infant years,—that mother's fondness which, with a devotion almost idolatry, goes out toward the little living image of God, which He hath given into her arms and her heart,—that mother's love which, if sickness prostrate her idol, never wearies in watchfulness, even unto martyrdom, and would even make itself vicarious in sacrifice for the life of

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the child,—that mother's love is not to be estimated by any measure of filial affection which the child can give to her again.

In like manner, the father's care which endures only second to the mother's,—that fatherly self-denial which offers up his lifetime of toil to keep his offspring from want, or to give them a competence or an education,—that fatherly affection which supplements the mother's tenderness with a masculine strength, so that by the combined heroism of devotion in both, the children may know no want which parental love can remove,—that fatherly affection which may be made the interpreter of the Divine Father's love, is incapable of measurement or estimation by any capacity to give it back.

Filial love and affection can show appreciation but can make no recompense.

But there is a debt in the other direction. And it is surely an exaggeration to say that the misrule of parents more than the unobedience of children is the main cause which disrupts so many homes and breaks so many hearts. If the recording angel has kept all the records of the sorrows of childhood, there is a Sunday School Library in the archives of Heaven that must make the angels weep as they read, and cause Christ's wounds to bleed afresh. And make the sufferings of these little ones in some mysterious way made vicarious as if with Christ these dreadful records may

prove the open books out of which those who have abused their parenthood will be condemned. "Whoso offendeth one of these little ones, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and he were cast into the depths of the sea."

The parental relation sinks to the level of mere animal instinct, and its government degenerates either into intolerable tyranny or into slovenly neglect if any meaner idea of its significance be accepted than a most sacred mission to train immortals for Goodness and for God—to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

The stern iron rule which some fathers rigidly follow is one of the two surest ways to defeat this aim of the home. It not only negatives all influence for good, but it exerts a positive baleful influence. Such a rule cannot be pursued without the risk of frequent wrong, nay the certainty of injustice either in the punishment or the accusation, which "provokes the children to anger" under the stinging sense of wrong. Children are thus discouraged in good, not only, but hardened against it. A father's hard, unfeeling, overbearing absolutism is pretty sure to excite rebellion in his boy, especially if he is a "chip of the old block." "There is," says Bushnell, "a monotony of continuous, ever-sounding iteration of arbitrary authority which is really awful. It does not stop with ten commandments, like the word on Sinai,

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but it keeps the thunder up, from day to day, saying always that shall not do this, and that, and the other, till in fact there is really nothing left to be done. The child lives under a trip-hammer of commandment, beaten to the ground as fast as he attempts to rise. All commandments of course in such a system of government come to sound very much alike and one appears to be about as important as another, and as all are equally annoying the child comes to hate them all alike, and to put them all aside. The plastic soul of youth, a material which when rightly wrought is as yielding as molten steel, and tempered in the crystal waters that flow from the source, may be shaped into the form of virtue, or it may be burned to brittleness by passion, and twisted under the wheel and misshapen down. It is often said that "you must shut the door to the spirit." This is one of the worst of all the bad maxims of family government. "Shut the door" is the one you would not do that you were desiring it to exit. And as for your shut the door to the spirit to be subdued, for influenced, or otherwise, say to the children to be sure, but do not shut the door to the guiding hand.

Now as the exercise of the much authority, is but your desire for obedience, that these treatments which are made that there is a matter of authority, or the systematic management which is necessary to the child, is a matter of passion. What

is there that so soon and surely uproots all sense of obligation, and the very idea of responsibility? Too great rigidity creates a hate of obligation, and awakens resistance and rebellion against authority and law; but this looseness makes a jest of duty, and a mockery of right and wrong.

Neither of these extremes need be reached in parental rule. The true fatherly government may be learned from that of God. The Gospel, while it does not annul one jot or tittle of the law, teaches that the kingdom of heaven, which strict laws regulate, is yet a reign of goodness, forbearance, long suffering, and loving kindness. Though justice is still a Divine attribute, forgiveness is too.

The business of training children would be too terribly perilous to be attempted, if God had not given us covenant promise, and firm ground of confidence, in the strength and supremacy of *moral principle*. The parent who in faith has planted *this* in the mind of his child, or rather who faithfully cultivates it as God has planted it there,—who trains it upward until its growth gives it a controlling force in the soul,—will have no further trouble in guiding his child, and need have no anxiety about the character of the future man. This does not require all the wisdom of God, but it does need something of the kindness of Christ. I have seen parents of the greatest intellectual ability, apart from religious consecration, making shipwreck of the household. And on the other hand I have seen

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parents scarcely up to the average in natural cleverness, or sound sense, rear a family of children much superior to themselves in native gifts, in such wise as to make secure their future usefulness to society. The wisdom of such parents was the wisdom of goodness,—the capacity of kindness.

XIII

THE DISCIPLINE OF EXPERIENCE

"Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter."—JOHN xiii. 7.

IT was when Peter, under the impulse of humility, asked, "Lord, dost Thou wash my feet?" that Jesus used the words of the text. Seeing that the symbolism of His action was not apprehended even by the apostle who had been prominent for his intuitive insight of truth, Jesus answered and said unto him, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt understand hereafter."

Spiritual insight and knowledge are experimental and progressive. It is a general truth that the deepest knowledge comes of experience. The eye of a child, in exactness of visual angle and sensitiveness of the optic nerve, may correctly take in an external view; but it is only the poet and the artist that grasp the full picture. The perception of a savage may be no better than that of a camera, even for objects in which a philosopher finds infinite meanings.

The idea applies through the whole range of culture and refinement; and, as these have their utmost

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reach and possibility in Christianity, they afford many an example in illustration of this truth. The sense of the beautiful, for instance, is an instinct which exists in every period of life and condition of society. But children and the uncultured perceive at first only the conspicuous. It would be an exceptional child that, on her first sight of flowers, would not pluck the poppy and the peony before the lily of the valley and the violet. And the rude squaw, in her wigwam, viewing with complacency her gaudy shawl and gaily beaded moccasins, would hardly apprehend Christ's meaning when He said, "Consider the lilies of the field; . . . Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." Taste requires to be developed by a varied experience, and a wide range of comparison, before it can pierce the superficial, and perceive and appreciate all the deep and delicate possibilities of the beautiful.

The same is true of music and literature. Many are delighted with trifling ditties and amateur minstrelsy, who are indifferent to Handel's sublime Oratorios and Mendelssohn's exquisite songs. Youths are fascinated with trashy novels, who would soon tire of the great masters of letters. It is to be hoped of all such that what they know not now they will understand afterward.

The general truth finds a still better illustration in the maternal instinct. The germ of this is, in girlhood, first manifest perhaps in love for a doll;

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then in special affection for the infant sister and baby brother. But only a mother indeed can feel the full and holy meaning of maternal affection.

The same is true of other human relations. Children know but little of filial feeling until, with children of their own for whose love they yearn, they are taught to turn again toward their parents with a love of such strength and truth as before they had not known. The son who has been careless of a father's counsel, and often indeed has scorned it,—once let a boy of his own begin to follow his bad example, and mock at his authority,—will, through this discipline of a sorrow that breaks the heart of its hardness, be brought to regard his own father with a veneration never known before. And the daughter who has been indifferent, perhaps undutiful,—blind to her mother's kindness, and heedless of her sacrifice,—when she herself has passed through the valley of the agony and come to the care of training a child in truthfulness, will rise to a new realization of what is dutiful and daughterly; and on that height of clearer vision, her mother shall stand transfigured before her, henceforth the object of a devotion which is the most like worship of all the finite homage of the heart. Be patient, parents: what children know not now they shall understand afterward.

But what these things merely illustrate is fully exemplified in religion. There is something better

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than the æsthetic sentiment; it is the sense of the beauty of holiness and the loveliness of religious devotion. And this perception finds its development, in accuracy and delicacy, by appropriate exercise. The sense of moral beauty and the insight of religious consistency and harmony, have capacity for indefinite expansion. It requires a series of suitable experiences to develop the moral sense and to discipline the spiritual sensibilities, before the true meaning of Christ is understood, or the real mission of discipleship practically apprehended. Sin has encrusted the soul with selfishness. There is an unnatural opaqueness of mind and obtuseness of heart that must be crystallized into transparency and refractive power to focalize the Divine light upon a soul, before the moral sense can take in the Gospel in all its breadth, or the spiritual sympathies apprehend Christ in the greatness of His love.

It often needs the discipline of affliction, the baptism of suffering such as Christ was baptized with, before we are brought into oneness of spirit with Him, and *our* hearts quickened by the throb of *His*. This explains why such numbers of sufferers become Christ's disciples. They are touched with the love of the Divine sufferer; and their tenderness toward the afflicted is an evidence of their discipleship. Through their own yearning for sympathy they understand the value it may have to another. The Golden Rule is learned by experience, and self-

love, thus sanctified, becomes a just measure of one's love to his neighbour.

It is personal acquaintance with Christ, through His Spirit and His people,—fellowship with Him, and those with whom He identified Himself,—that develops the spiritual insight and religious sensibility. Personal experience of the realities of religion,—the exercise of penitence and belief, the assurance of pardon, the witness of the Spirit, the consciousness of the favour and grace of Christ, and the integrity and steadfastness, trust and love that come of intimacy with the Divine-human life,—all these combine to deepen the moral perception, and to give distinctness to the spiritual sense beyond the power of cavil and casuistry, or other disguises of evil or devices of the Devil, to deceive and mislead.

F.

But the true meaning of Christ's symbolic act, and indeed the right apprehension of His entire life, come to the disciple through practical service.

The life of Christ had been one continuous lesson of self-denial and sacrifice. By many a special precept and illustrative parable had the Master endeavoured to impress it upon His followers that the spirit of Christianity is self-abnegation. And now about to institute the Supper, prophetic of the completion of His own ministry of humiliation,—the offering of Himself upon the Cross,—He

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risers from the table, and conscious of His glory and Godhood. He girdeth Himself with a towel and, pouring water into a basin, He performs the humble service of washing His disciples' feet. Thus, with the commemoration of His own climax of sacrifice, He has forever associated His final instruction to His disciples: the full substance of the Gospel concentrated into a single lesson, more impressive for its brevity; the whole of practical Christianity in a single symbolic act.

When it came Peter's turn to be served, he modestly declined the honour. And it was a proper feeling, in commendable contrast with the shamelessness of Judas, who did not refuse to have Jesus wash his feet. But it is manifest that Peter did not comprehend the significance of the transaction. He did not yet know, what he well understood afterward, that there is something better than the deference due to a superior, namely, the acknowledgment of the claims of a humble brother. It needed the vision of a sheet let down from heaven filled with all manner of creeping things which God had cleansed, before his narrow view of the Gospel broadened sufficiently to understand that Redemption was provided for the Gentiles. And this lesson, thus impressively illustrated, was not at first fully learned. In respect to this very principle he was afterward "to be blamed." But at length, through the lessons of experience, the severity of discipline, and a ministry of hardship unto mar-

tyrdom, what he knew not at the first, he came to understand perfectly afterward.

The apostle's experience is representative. It is ever and again reproduced in Christian discipleship. Human nature is stubborn stuff. It learns but slowly the great Lesson of Divine Love, and ever more reluctantly applies it to the life. But when a soul is enkindled with a spirit to respond to the cry of sorrow and the call for service, it then at length comes to comprehend the amazing greatness of Christ's self-abasement. It is the service of humanity that most discloses to a soul the unspeakable gentleness and compassion of Christ. When a disciple has enlisted in a ministry of helpfulness, and his thought is expanded to a broader grasp of Gospel philanthropy, he gives a sure proof of religious insight and the best evidence of Christian knowledge. Back of all true self-denying devotion, there must have been some adequate spiritual experience, some Divine Charge and Call.

There are, to be sure, souls keenly alive by nature to the sight of suffering, souls of sympathetic temperament that are not of the Christian type; but without that impulse from above which the Gospel gives, the compassion will oftenest expend itself in a mere emotion. And there are instances, it is cheerfully admitted, of sacrifice among those who disavow the Christian religion; but how often the pride of self-righteousness or the vanity of ostentation discounts and vitiates such devotion! Nor

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has any other cause commanded such talent or retained such constancy in its followers as Christianity. The annals of patriotism make some approach, but cannot form a parallel alongside of the shining ranks that extend across the centuries of Christian history. Facts so grand presuppose a reality of experience correspondent with the constancy and the consecration. Consecration has been intensified into a single syllable; and that one word is Christ. It was the love of God incarnate in His Son that He imparted to believing souls. Ah, such love! to stoop so low to wash the disciples' feet, to teach all His followers forever that no service which they can render another is beneath them. Such love! to stoop so low to wash even the traitor's feet, to teach His followers that no one, however unworthy, not even the worst, is to be excluded from the ministrations of Christian sympathy and sacrifice. Such love,—how high it is, thus to humble itself. Henceforth a Divine dignity attaches to the lowliest services. True greatness is ever consistent with genuine humility. This is the Gospel paradox: The humbler we become the higher we attain; the place of service is the post of honour,—for there we are by the side of Christ, and thus we are like Him.

When the mad rabble were moving from the mock trial of Christ to the place of execution, a poor straggler,—sympathy with the victim doubtless visibly depicted in his expression,—drew near;

and when the august Sufferer seemed fainting under His burden, this man from Africa was impressed by the rude soldiery into what they thought the menial service of carrying His cross for Him. And the name of Simon the Cyrenean is forever linked with the name of Jesus of Nazareth as the first cross-bearer in His cause.

The Legend of the Sangreal, which Lowell and Tennyson have put into verse, beautifully illustrates this truth. The Cup in which Christ distributed the wine when He instituted the Supper,—so runs the legend,—was used afterward by Joseph of Arimathea to catch the blood that dripped from the wounds of Christ on the Cross. Whoever should possess this Cup was to become purified,—thought and feeling filled with chasteness and charity. And so, many a brave knight in the days of heraldry went in quest of it. As one of these rode forth from his castle, mounted upon his charger,—dress and armour glittering with the insignia of nobility,—it chanced a cripple lay at his gate, and asked an alms. The proud knight spurned him from his path with haughty scorn. Years passed. The knight rode the world through, and spent his wealth in a vain search for the Grail; until, grown old, broken in health and hope, he returned home to die. As he entered again his now dilapidated castle, the cripple, it happened, again lay at his gate. But now,—himself afoot and weary, reduced to the same condition of poverty,—he greeted the cripple

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as a brother; and lo! at once the vision of the Sanguinal was in his hand! He felt Christ's blood warming at his heart; he had found what he sought, where he might have found it at the first; his soul was filled with purity, charity, consecration, and Christliness.

"Go walk with Him the Vale of Grief;
You'll find Him in the hearts that bleed;
He now as then hath human need
Of loving sympathy's relief.

"Or climb with Him the Height of Pain,
And watch Him in the parting breath;
His death, to His, transfigures death,—
Behold in truth, 'To die is gain.'"¹

When we shall come up higher; when we shall no longer see in a mirror darkly, but face to face, and come to know even as also we have been known; then, for the first, all the full meaning of Christ's symbolic act, and the infinite significance of the text shall unfold to our souls. Yes! "what we know not now, we shall understand hereafter."

¹ Verses by the pastor.

XIV

"COURAGE"

"Let no man despise thee."—TITUS ii. 15, last clause.

IT has been shown in a former sermon that truth and purity are indispensable to respectability in the proper sense of the term, and in the honest judgments of men. These are the basis blocks upon which alone a true manhood can be built.

But to complete the edifice,—the dwelling of respectability,—other material must be inwrought into the character. Truth and purity are largely passive, and require to be supplemented by more active qualities, before the character can command unqualified respect or secure the truest esteem. Apart from them, positive endeavours in duty are either impossible or nothing; but they need to be enlisted in a moral warfare,—to be summoned into action and the battle,—in order to change their inertia into energy and effect. However great their weight, without motion there is no momentum, no force. A man may be true and yet be of little use; he may be pure and do but little good. One who sits with folded arms, may be honest as the day is long, and chaste as the light is clear, and yet

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be justly despised for an idle, aimless, worthless life.

Among the elements of character, therefore, that command respect, I shall enumerate,—a third: Moral Purpose.

There is no measure of one's manhood like his ambition. Find to what one aspires, and you will know whether you may respect or must despise him. His ambition will bespeak his principles, his aspirations will divulge his character. The man in whose highest ideas life is but a grand chance to subserve self, whose primary practical maxim is, Get all you can and keep what you get, and who accordingly encases himself in a rhinoceros hide of selfishness that cannot be pierced with a twinge of sympathy for suffering humanity, is entitled to nothing better than contempt, and is quite likely to get his deserts. But he, in whose lofty thought and noble heart, life is a sacred mission, a Divine opportunity for doing good; whose chief ambition for himself is to develop a manly, moral character, and so to glorify God; and who accordingly does it right royally by making all happy around by his generous helpfulness, deserves to be respected and esteemed, and will find his reward by increasing in favour with God and man. However humble a man may be, or little the work he may do, with such a spirit and practice, he is permitted to feel that there are a few hearts if no more, that are both happier and better for his having lived; and he finds his reward in

their answering love, and the conscious approval of God.

A high aim may accompany and control every right calling; it renders sacred each secular profession. There is no lot so lowly, no labour so menial, that it may not be ennobled and glorified by a worthy moral purpose. It lifts the humblest life to the dignity of a mission. It secures the cordial esteem of men and the constant benediction of God. And, on the other hand, there is no high place or grade, no coveted social or official position, that can shield its incumbent from being deservedly despised if he be void of a corresponding moral purpose; nay, the very height on which he stands only enhances, by the sorry contrast, his bad desert, and exposes him the more thoroughly to just contempt for living so ignobly below his moral privileges. Power and position are opportunity and responsibility. To be unequal to this measure is to be deficient in manhood,—is to sink into that pity which is scorn. “Let no man despise thee.”

When Paley was a student at the University he at once took high rank for his talents; but, falling into bad habits, he abandoned the honours of scholarship for the pleasures of the carousal; and renounced the promise of influence and usefulness, for the fleeting and deceitful enjoyments of dissipation, till at length he came to be despised not only by his tutors and sober-minded school-fellows, but also by his boon companions at the saloon. It was

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one of these, in his sober moments, that said to Paley, after a debauch in which both had joined: "Paley, it is a disgrace to waste such talents as you have. I'm of no account, but I'm ashamed to have a hand in squandering such gifts as yours; and I shall cut your acquaintance if you don't stop it." And Paley did stop; he turned right about; he regained his position, stood at the head of his classes at Cambridge, and after graduation became the leading theologian of his time. The sharp rebuke stung him to a sense of his self-degradation, goaded him to a decision to "let no man despise" him, and aroused him to a moral purpose of saving his self-respect, of meriting the esteem of men, and securing the plaudit of God. Ah, how many a man of God-given ability—a Divine endowment of soul more inestimable than Gold, and the blessed promise of inheritance in Our Father's House,—is, like Paley in college, squandering away his capital of opportunity and talent; is, like Esau of old, bartering his birthright for a mess of pottage! "Let no man despise thee." Pray for a moral purpose to make the most of yourself, the noblest and the best. Pray for a moral purpose to keep you from becoming the least, the worst, and the meanest of men, when God meant you to be enlisted and enrolled in the shining ranks of the true and the good, who feel that they have a work to do and mean to do it well. It is pitiful, the amount of power that, for the lack of moral purpose, is lost to the world,

that might be utilized, if thus inspired, to uplift human society and largely to relieve it of its burden both of sorrow and of sin. If the young men and the young women of this village and vicinity, or a dozen of them such as the twelve whom Christ chose, would but realize what a power they could aggregate and what a work accomplish in combination under the promptings of a worthy moral purpose and especially the inspirations of religion, they could revolutionize the prevalent influences among our youth, stay and turn the tide from wrong to right, erase the shame that blots the fair page of the day-book of our boys not yet in their teens drunk in our streets. Methinks, God's ministers need not plead for four years more for reinforcements to uphold their hands and strengthen their hearts to endure these responsibilities. The moral purpose that is worthiest of manhood is to labour to save ourselves and others from sin, and so to serve God. The price paid for redemption hath made no less than this the measure and the mission of true men.

“Life is real, life is earnest,
And the grave is not its goal,—
'Dust thou art, to dust returnest,'
Was not spoken of the soul.

“Let us then be up and doing
With a heart for any fate,
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labour and to wait.”

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I will consider but one other element of character that commands respect, and that is Moral Courage.

There is scarcely anything that is more despised than cowardice. Let it be once settled unquestionably, that a man is a poltroon without sufficient steadiness to have an opinion, or to form a purpose, and is ready, on occasion, to surrender his principles,—if he ever had any,—and that man is justly held under contempt. One would rather see a man, strong and true to false ideas so long as they are his honest convictions, than having no ideas of duty and no moral firmness at all. You can respect a man of conscience and convictions even though he be lacking in Christian enlightenment. But *with* all other qualities, manhood is incomplete *without* moral courage. With truth and purity and high moral purpose, character finds its culmination in Christian heroism. God's heroes of old won their crowns by witnessing to the truth with a fortitude of fidelity that endured unto martyrdom. And the Master Himself,—with what grandeur of moral courage He marched to Jerusalem in the full, sure prospect of the agony of Gethsemane and the ignominy on Golgotha. "I have," said He, "a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" And those words that were wrung from Him as an earnest of that agony, have passed from lips to lips all along the line, the watchword of the martyrs. "Courage,

Master Ridley,” spake his comrade mid the faggots. “Courage, Master Ridley; by God’s grace we this day light a fire in England that shall not go out.”

Moral courage is noblest and most heroic; and finds its inspiration only in the spirit of Christ. None but Christian heroism is healthy. That moral courage, if it may be so called, is morbid, which incites the Hindu devotee to cast himself in front of Juggernaut,—which impels the Hindu widow to immolate herself at the funeral of her husband, and the Hindu mother to cast her babe into the Ganges. And the asceticism, too, of the early centuries, which buffeted and mortified the body with uncalled-for bruises, and exposures without occasion, was but the unreal shadow of true Christian heroism. The reality is simply the disposition and decision to go forward where real deeds are to be done and real sufferings are to be endured, —where some true work must be wrought, at the risk of whatever loss or cross. It is only when incidental to other duties that sacrifices become duties themselves. Paul allowed himself to be let down in a basket from the wall of Damascus to escape from murder, because there was no occasion,—no demand in the circumstances,—for martyrdom. But when the time came that, incidental to his work, the alternative was the denial of his Lord, he said, “I am ready to be offered, I have fought the good fight, I have kept the faith.”

Ah! in the presence of such heroism as this,

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the quality of it that is called for on ordinary occasions seems scarcely worthy of the name. And how pitiful were the cowardice of him who should prove unequal to the common calls for moral courage. The petty persecution of ridicule or reproach does not make a very large demand upon the spirit of martyrdom. It is arrant cowardice that magnifies the cackle of laughter and the cracking of jokes into the crackling of faggots in the flame. That must be a brave youth that, when enticed to drink or to smoke, to swear or to lie, dares not say "no," for fear of a laugh or a scoff! It is when you yield that you render yourself truly liable to be despised.

Christian men and Christian women, if you would have your children develop into true manhood and womanhood, teach them truth, teach them purity, inspire them with moral purpose and moral courage,—help them to build of these an altar in their hearts,—and then never fear but they will be nobly devoted to all that is good, and truly to God. And, young men and young women, would you have honour and be worthy of it, would you secure esteem and deserve it, do not forget that the line which separates the amiable, the estimable and the honourable from the despicable, the contemptible, the shameful, and the hateful is identical with that which discriminates the good from the bad, the true from the false, the right from the wrong. God, whose clear eye hath drawn the dividing line,

and hath fixed the moral one as the impassable and only distinction that classifies mankind, has His Royal scorn for your social laws that would stratify society according to circumstances and possessions. Coming into His presence abrogates all pretentious claims, and every man is classed according to his moral status,—on the lofty plane of the good or the dead level of the bad.

And in each heart, when you get at its inmost honest consciousness,—the holy of holies of the soul where remains some smouldering fire of devotion to the true and the good that hath not yet gone out on the altar, and where yet is visible some fitful flicker of the shekinah, a faint glow still of the Presence of God,—yea! alike under God's clear eye and the soul's honest conscience, unerringly is the unworthy pitied, despised, or abhorred, and the worthy approved and honoured and loved.

See, I have set before you blessing and cursing, the waste and the worth of life. I charge you, with Paul, “Let no man despise you.” I charge you, cause not Christ, who died to save, to be ashamed of you in the presence of His angels. I charge you, choose the true, and do the good, and so love and serve God.

XV

TEMPERANCE

Address delivered at a Mass Meeting

(The science of this speech remains to-day practically reliable. That alcohol can be made to oxydize in the body (up to an inadequate figure *per diem*) does partly modify one of its premises—that alcohol performs *no* food-function whatever; but this does not break down its essential premise: that alcohol is a poison rather than a food. And the cumulative effect of new knowledge has only been to sustain the practical logic of the argument. An International Abstaining Medical Association, numbering many of the leading physicians of the world, issued, in recent years, a manifesto declaring explicitly for total abstinence.)

MR. CHAIRMAN, and Ladies and Gentlemen:—

Let me state three axioms, before proceeding to an Argument and Appeal in behalf of Abstinence and Prohibition:

First, Temperance is a virtue.

Second, Intemperance is a vice.

Third, Alcohol is a poison.

Let these be taken for granted, either as self-evident truths or as well established facts.

But as to where runs the line that marks the limits of this virtue and the confines of this vice; and as to whether this poison taken in small quan-

tities is injurious,—in other words, as to what is the division between sobriety and drunkenness,—this is not so generally agreed upon and acknowledged as to be beyond controversy.

And my first proposition is this:

I. *That in the Liquor Question, Temperance is Total Abstinence.*

And in support of this proposition I have three considerations to offer. The first is that total abstinence is the only straight line and the surely safe line, while all others are curve lines or wave lines, and liable to bend more or less (and especially more) away from the direct path of soberness and into the devious ways of inebriation.

But the moderates, while admitting that the strict line is absolutely secure, contend that there is another way where liberty is less restricted, that is also right and safe.

Now it may be admitted that there are *some* who can pursue this course through life without apparently passing beyond the bounds of sobriety, but I argue for a way that shall be safe for *all*.

Of course if one does *not* keep the abstinent path, it is no more safe than the moderate way when one *does* keep that. But by the supposition in the one case, the danger is in abandoning abstinence; in the other, abstinence is already abandoned or not adopted. And the question returns—remains—which starting point is the more dangerous? It is simply an axiom that the totally absti-

nent *never* become drunkards; while it is clearly a fact that the moderately indulgent *often do*. And if you hold that your deviation is but slight—your line lying essentially alongside the straight one, and practically coinciding with the right one—like the sun's ray, a wave line yet straight—then the difference is not worth your contention; you may as well make the essential, actual, and the practical, real. While, on the other hand, if your deviation is so great, your indulgence so deep, that it has become difficult to renounce it, there is in that fact the highest reason for doing so, without delay.

A second reflection in defence of the proposition is, that the true definition of temperance is: moderation in right things, and abstinence from wrong things.

When there is excess in the use of healthful food and drink,—indulgence unto gluttony and gorging,—the cure for it is moderation. The true analogy is not between alcohol and food, but alcohol and whatever else is morbid and abnormal in the physical appetites.

For in the first place, the craving for alcohol is unnatural. It is not an appetite. There is by nature no such craving in the human system. Unless he has inherited the taint of it in his blood, or had it instilled into him from the nursery spoon, the youth who begins to drink finds that his stomach relucts with strong revulsion. He must create the craving. And it has been proved past denial that

in the confirmed drinker the demand for alcohol arises from a diseased condition of the linings of the stomach. As was visibly observed in the case of San Martin of Canada, there is, during the raging for stimulants, a breaking out on the internal surfaces similar in appearance to erysipelas. And this irritation, because in the stomach, has the seeming and is the illusion of an appetite; and since it was caused by alcohol it refers to that,—just as, by the feeling, you distinguish a wound by fire from a wound with a knife. Now if you would expect to cure a burn by thrusting it again into the blaze, or heal a gash by hacking it again, then by all means take alcohol to satisfy the hankering for it; mistaking the pain with the suggestion of its cause, for a thirst for it,—and so increasing the irritation instead of allaying it.

The human system has no demand for alcohol. It does not receive it; it cannot assimilate it; it never enters as a constituent element, or part, of the body. Science has conclusively proved that it is not a food. And it is folly, therefore, to impose upon the stomach and intestines, the veins and the lungs, the labour of disposing of it and expelling it, when it leaves no kind of equivalent to these organs for their toil, as is the case with food.

And alcohol is to the body not simply a foreign element;—it is a deadly poison. As soon as it enters the system the struggle begins, not to use it but to be rid of it, and the strain results not sim-

ply in functional derangement, but organic injury. Alcohol always disturbs, and often destroys the vital action—decomposes the blood, paralyzes the nerves, and especially attacks and deranges the brain. You have seen men whose faces were an illustrated publication, a highly illuminated advertisement, of their private habits. And you have seen men whose crooked walk was a kind of drawing or diagram of their devious morality. And you have seen men whose incoherent talk was a good illustration of the disjointed logic of their conduct. But, did you ever think what that bloated and swollen and purpled nose means?—(and that is but a prominent specimen of the whole body, through and through). It means that the functioning powers of blood and nerve have been injured—partially destroyed. And when you have seen a drunken man going his gait, did you ever ask yourself what that staggering is? It is temporary paralysis! He cannot control his muscles, because alcohol has palsied his nerves,—the message of command despatched by the will from the brain does not wholly reach the limbs,—the wires have been cut. And when you have been compelled to listen to the inebriate's incoherent conversation, has the awful thought never crossed your brain that *that* is transient insanity? Dr. Carpenter, distinguished alike as a philosopher and a physician, says, in his prize essay on this subject: "Considering that the state of intoxication is, itself, strictly

speaking, a transient paroxysm of insanity, it can excite no surprise that a confirmed state of mental derangement should frequently result from the repetition of the cause which produced the single paroxysm." And the doctor adds, "There are in fact, some individuals in whom a fit of positive madness, persisting for some little time after the immediate effects of the stimulus have subsided, *is brought on by every indulgence in drinking.*" There is now a young man in a mad-house in a neighbouring state, who during the war was groom to an officer in the Army. He understood his business, and was sufficiently intelligent to do it well. But in attending a low dance, he indulged in one debauch; one debauch permanently demented him. True, there are others whose brain will bear the abuse of half a century without wholly breaking down. But that waste of nerve-force and brain-power must, proportionally, have impaired the intellectual capacity. The loss is just as real, though not so great. There are men who take a pride in the quantity of liquor they can stand under; boast that they can indulge in daily potations, and not be thrown. But, though they should never tumble into the gutter, it seems to me, it is to be drunk enough to have so low an ambition! And though at the start one's nerves be steel, and keep strong for years, alcohol at length will rust them out. Victor Hugo, in that touching story of the poor of Paris,—"Les Misérables,"—tells of Jean Valjean's at-

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tempt to pass through the great sewer under the City. At first only his feet were defiled with the foul flowings; but as he proceeded he got deeper and deeper into the sickening filth—now to his knees, anon to his loins. But still he pursued his repulsive path, with steady head in spite of the stupefying stench, when all at once he came upon a place where the masonry had given way, and he found himself settling, helplessly, into the cesspool. So it is with the firm drinker. As he advances, his nervous vigour will become impaired by the repeated potions of liquid poison, until at length with brain debilitated, and intellect imbecile from habitual stupefactions, he will sink at last into the cesspool of helpless and hapless sots.

The inspired description of a drunkard in the Proverbs is still wonderfully accurate after the lapse of three thousand years,—“woes,” “sorrow,” “contention,” “babbling,” “wounds without cause,” “redness of eyes,” and the whole culminating in delirium tremens when “at the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder.” And by the side of this picture drawn by the wise man, Isaiah (God’s seer two and a half centuries later) placed this other one:

“Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning that they may follow strong drink, that continue until night till wine inflame them,”— . . .
“therefore hell hath enlarged herself and opened her mouth without measure,—and their glory and

their multitude and their pomp and he that rejoiceth shall descend into it,——”

A third argument for this proposition—that, in the liquor question, temperance is abstinence—is that, from no other stand than that of abstinence, can a healthy influence be exerted in favour of Temperance Reform.

It is claimed that this is a factitious state of things, wholly created by the fanatical advocates of total abstinence. But no, it is simply a fact, independent of any advocacy one way or the other. If it be granted that there are any who cannot safely take the lower plane of moderation, then that fact inevitably results in this other. One cannot stand down there and help the fallen to reform, nor hinder the innocent of like temperament from a fall. Nay, worse than this:—the fact that some, of strong will, can safely adopt moderation, acts as a constant decoy, that causes the weak of will to fall. We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak. The grand Pauline height of self-denial which renounces a personal privilege for the sake of duty to others,—that is the manly, the lofty stand. “If meat maketh my brother to offend I will eat no more meat while the world standeth.” If Paul could thus forego an important article of diet in consideration of a scruple of superstition, then surely much more ought we to sacrifice a selfish gratification for the sake of the reformation of

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our fellow man. "It is good neither to eat meat, nor drink wine nor to do anything whereby thy brother stumbleth."

I have, then, endeavoured to demonstrate the proposition that *In the Liquor Question, Temperance is Total Abstinence*, by three arguments:

1. Because, for *all*, abstinence is the only strictly straight and surely safe line.
2. Because Temperance in its true significance is moderation in right things, Abstinence from wrong things.
3. Because, from no other stand can one's influence be wholly in favour of the temperance reform.

My second proposition is this:

II. *That the Legal Prohibition of the Liquor Traffic is a Political Duty.*

It is not only the right but the duty, too, of a state to see that the Republic suffers no detriment, to foster only such trade as secures and promotes the best interests of its citizens, and to tolerate none that subverts the national wealth, manhood, and morality.

First, then, it squanders the public wealth. One hundred millions of bushels of grain are annually destroyed in the United States in the manufacture of alcoholic liquors. That would supply half a barrel of flour or meal to every individual in our whole population. Commissioner Wells tells us that the sum of money spent last year for liquors, actually

consumed in the United States, was one thousand millions of dollars,—an amount that would cancel the public debt in less than three years. Now let it be remembered that this expenditure was not an investment returning a dividend. It was so much money consumed and that uselessly. It has been estimated that the annual expense in the United States in support of the Christian Ministry is twelve millions of dollars. Add eight millions more for the other current expenses of the churches, and the fearful fact stares at us out of these statistics, that this enlightened, this Christian Nation, gives every year fifty dollars for liquor to every one dollar for religion,—fifty times as much to support the cause of crime, as to support the means of grace.

Let us come down to our own state. Rhode Island's liquor bill in one year (1867) was \$10,-231,240. Keep the round sum, more than ten millions. Her school bill, the same year, was \$428,-630; call it five hundred thousand. And the fact stands in figures, that giddy little Rhoda squanders to gratify her appetite, twenty dollars to every one-dollar that intelligent Rhoda expends to educate her children.

Philip of Macedon once when intoxicated imposed upon a soldier an unjust penalty. The soldier said: "I appeal from Philip drunk to Philip sober." If one were to ask this state for a contribution to almost any cause, it might be prudent to

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reverse this, and appeal from Rhoda sober to Rhoda drunk.

But let us narrow our view still more,—down to things nearer home. Within a few years, one of your rum-sellers has enlarged his house from a seven by nine shanty to a four story residence—a mansion, by contrast—a monument of the popular generosity; while your school-teachers can scarcely, from their salaries, afford respectable tenements.

These are bad facts,—for the nation, for the state, and for the town. “Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Ascalon, lest the daughter of the Philistine rejoice, lest the daughter of the uncircumcised triumph!”

But if the financial view of the matter is bad, its social and sanitary aspect is worse. Rum sends to an untimely grave in the United States, sixty thousand a year. It orphans two hundred thousand children, and commits to the poor-house two hundred thousand more. Do you know what these figures mean? Think of yourself carried away in death and your now happy family left bereaved and in need. Ponder the idea, till it seems a reality, till it brings an anguish. And then multiply the misfortune until, sixty thousand fathers having died, you feel the agony of four hundred thousand little ones left fatherless or in poverty.

When the war was upon us, it was awful to see the nation writhing under the wine-press of God's wrath; fifty thousand a year of the flower of our

youth slain in the high places of the field. But that figure of speech, the wine-press as a type of the Divine judgment, only reaches its deepest meaning when it is taken literally. It is the actual wine-press that is gushing blood,—it is the brewery and the distillery that are crushing the life out of the nation. The war for the Union *was* awful; but it was over in four years, and it awakened the patriotism and quickened the moral pulse of the people. But this other horror, the alcoholic rebellion against man and God, equalling the war for the Union in its sacrifice of resources, and exceeding it in the sacrifice of life, has no cessation,—it goes right on, and all the while is degrading the nation and debauching the public morals.

And this is the worst aspect of the alcoholic traffic and custom,—that of its immorality.

The statistics of crime derived from the records of our jails, prisons, penitentiaries, and reformatories, prove that rum is a mother of crime,—the whole brood, Fraud and Theft and Arson, and Manslaughter and Murder,—four-fifths at least of all the crimes committed can be directly traced to that parentage. Three hundred murders, four hundred suicides, and one hundred thousand men and women in prison,—these are the terrible statistics.

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This, then, is the indictment I bring against the liquor business:

It is wasteful of wealth.

It is fatal to life.

It is productive of crime.

And I confidently challenge any man to refute this charge before the community. No jury of twelve disinterested men could be selected in Christendom who would not return a verdict of "Guilty."

It may be asked, then, why is not Prohibition upon the statute book of every state and civilized nation? It may be replied, in the first place that the question has never yet, as the sole, single, and separate issue, come before the tribunal of Public Opinion; and in the second place, if it had, there are yet too many men whose interest or appetite would stultify their better judgment. But this very fact that an unscrupulous class hold the balance of power, and wield the ballot to defeat the People's Moral Choice, ought to fuse and weld into one all the disinterested and conscientious to oppose the demoralizing influence and do away with the drinking custom.

We have, in our town locally, virtual prohibition. But to make the no-license practically prohibit the traffic, needs a public sentiment to back the law. The town council may refuse to license, but unless the popular will enforce that refusal, our villages may still be debauched. It is pretty manifest that the public conscience of our county *is*, in a measure,

debauched, or that there is an important screw loose in the law.

Now the question comes up, What is to be done?

And, Mr. Chairman, I have to offer, as the close of this lecture, if so be it may clinch it, the following resolutions:

First, that it is the sense of this meeting that the Town should sustain any legal measures which may be taken to enforce the Liquor Law.

Second, that we do hereby, individually and collectively, pledge ourselves to co-operate, with property, or in person, in putting down the liquor out-lawry in our Town.

XVI

VOCATION

"Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do?"

"Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou Me."—JOHN xxi. 21, 22.

JESUS had questioned Peter tenderly but impressively concerning his devotion; and to that thrice-repeated "Lovest thou Me?" had each time added the command, "Feed My sheep. Feed My lambs." The pathos of that appeal, the solicitude and urgency of its repetition, had imparted to Peter an indelible impression and a powerful impulse. Manifestly the Master's commission to him was unto active, arduous service,—his mission to the world, his business in the church was *work*. And this charge and calling to Duty and to Deeds was to be unto death. A lifetime of labour should—when he should "be old"—come to an appropriate close in the climax of martyrdom. Thus it was signified to Simon both by what life, and "by what death he should glorify God."

It was when the heavy sense of this solemn charge first burdened him,—while he was still stunned and staggered by the consciousness of its

responsibilities,—while he was nerving himself for the purpose and girding for the work, that “Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following”; and as if hoping for relief in the co-operation of this comrade-apostle—as if desirous to have Jesus appoint John to a share of *his* business and his *burden*, “Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, *Lord, and what shall this man do?*”

“Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, *what is that to thee? Follow thou Me.*”

Peter and John were men of mark among the apostles, but utterly unlike in native make. Indeed, they stand for all time respectively as representatives of the two groups of gifts or types of life, which in various grades and combinations supplement each other, and illustrate severally the *power* and the *patience* of the Christian faith; in a service, by the one of faithful, energetic labour, and, by the other, of gentle, devoted love.

These two characteristics are the prominent features in the incident before us; and each sets off and brings out the other. “That which lies before us,” says Olshausen,¹ “cold and dry in lifeless letters and words, was, in the actual scene, enlivened by the Saviour’s significant and spiritual expression. . . . It is plain that ‘*tarry*’ is the converse of ‘*follow*.’” The Master’s command to Peter is “Onward,” “Follow,” “Feed My sheep and lambs.” His will is that John shall wait. “Each

¹ Vol. III, pp. 154-5.

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of them," says Neander,¹ "had his own particular charisma (or gift) and his peculiar position which depended upon this." Peter's lifework was one of trial and struggle and agitation and turbulence,—a service of activity and conflict ending in a violent death; John's was quiet, peaceful, tranquil, ending with a natural death at a good old age.

These two qualities of character, though having opposite channels of action in very marked contrast, find equal room in the world and in the character of Christ. And all the diversities of activity and temperament, into which these two extreme types may blend and commingle as they supplement each other, are equally needful to the completed structure and perfect working of the church, and indispensable members of the diversified body of Christ. There is a call in the church for heroic achievement; and this call comes to some in every age and place as imperatively as to Peter, "Follow Me";—"follow!" though it be to face the enmity and venom of a "generation of vipers"—"follow!" though it be to "weep over Jerusalem" that will not hear the word;—"follow!" though it be as a homeless wanderer who "hath not where to lay his head"; "follow!" though it be to drain the cup of agony, alone and unsustained in Gethsemanes of the soul;—"follow!" though it be to the trial of accusation and criticism and censure as relentless as the Pharisaic Sanhedrin; "follow!" though it

¹ Vol. I, p. 212.

be to bear crosses, to climb Calvaries, and to suffer crucifixion.

And—there is still that other call or class of callings—callings to the more quiet ministries of gentleness and the amenities of religion,—a mission that comes to many, with the sanction of the voice Divine, as it came to John, “Tarry till I come”;—“tarry,” even “if I will” that in serving “the least of My brethren” it be your mission to “do it unto Me”;—“tarry,” even “if I will” that your calling be unto the lowliest walks to carry to the unfortunate and the wronged and the fallen, the aid of the “Good Samaritan,” and to pour into bleeding wounds that will not heal without it, the “oil and wine” of Christian sympathy;—“tarry” even “if I will” that yours be the simple commission of “giving a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple,” through a lifetime of quiet obscurity and uneventful usefulness.

Divine power resides in the hidden passivities, no less than in conspicuous activities of Christian service. The graces, as well as the gifts, are of God. The same Divine insight that surnamed Simon Cephas, also and as aptly termed John, Boanerges! When, at the gate of the Temple called Beautiful, the cripple who sat asking alms was healed, the instrument of the miracle was not more the strength of faith spoken by the mouth of Peter, than the power of love that silently flowed from the heart of John. It was Peter who was equal to the occasion

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of Pentecost,—the first descent of the Holy Ghost, —to preach a sermon in that great emergency which instrumentally won three thousand souls; but it was John who on Patmos when commanded to write, could open heaven to the gaze of the faithful in every age, and give to all the vision of an Apocalypse, the Revelation!

Religion finds room for every one. It encourages no hero-worship according to the world's estimates of men. It does not deify the great intellect—it dignifies the large heart. It degrades to the same abasement all selfishness wherever exhibited or detected, of whatever shape or type, or sort, or form. And it exalts to the same lofty level of acceptableness, all sincere and earnest service wherever rendered or offered, whether in conspicuous or obscure position. The most massive mental power, the most masterly spiritual energy and enterprise can no more than subserve the Divine purpose, and the most hidden and humble service, the most quiet and retiring discipleship may no less co-work with Christ. The school-teacher in the little brown-board schoolhouse among the hills, if faithful to duty and with a heart for the work, though none of the pupils should ever go beyond reading, writing, and arithmetic, may be nobler in the sight of God than the president of a college with the most gifted youth of the land gathered under his instruction. The young woman that goes south to teach A B C to the freedmen, though many of her pupils may

never manifest more than the faintest degree of intelligence, may still be greater in the Divine estimate and measure, than the ruler of an empire, though she found universities to educate the best intellects of her realm. The backwoods preacher who stands on the frontiers of civilization and proclaims the Gospel by the light of tallow candles to the dwellers of the gulch and the gorge, may more grandly approach the standard of Christ's measure and stature than the ministers in magnificent tabernacles, who read weekly splendid intellectual essays to the assembled wealth and intelligence of the metropolis. The wife and mother in the cottage of poverty who with devoted love serves her husband and little ones, and with wakeful and weary eyes plies her tireless needle far into the night to keep decent the outworn garments of labour, may, under the fatherly gaze of God, far outshine as with the radiance of an angel, the one who with greater energy, if with less of love, watches over the hospitals of an army. Oh, and the patient sufferer who bears in the body the hopeless burden of disease through weary days and months and years, who yet gently, contentedly,—more than resignedly,—thankfully—accepts the sadly emphatic mandate to “tarry,”—“tarry till I come,” may thus in such sweetness of spirit and by the blessed lessons taught to others by such a life, more truly and acceptably serve the Saviour and the world, than the most energetic enterprise of masculine strength and

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health. It is not the deed that is done, but the spirit with which one does it, which decides the moral value of an act; and any one's work is great whose life is true.

But, finally, the one thought to which the text gives emphasis is that, *Each one is to do his part without regard to another's faithfulness or failure.*

When Peter questions Jesus as to what shall be John's part, the Master answers: "What is that to thee? Follow *thou* Me." Your task, Simon, is assigned you; concern not yourself with the part of John.

And the sharp rebuke has not lost its significance. It remains a mandate imperative. The principle is living still. As long as human nature remains the same, and the disposition continues to wish that another might share one's tasks, so long will this text be needed to teach that there is no such thing as shifting one's responsibility. The desire that it might be,—the tendency to attempt it,—is as prevalent as ever. There is more hard work to be done than there are heroes to do it. When in deeds that must be wrought, or in sufferings that must be undergone, no emolument is offered, but rather sacrifice asked,—where the prominent thing is not honour but labour and self-denial, not ease but toil and pain,—it is hard then to find the spirit that is equal to the achievement, the heroism that is commensurate with the demand. Ah! Christ is still bearing the lighted Bible among mankind, and the gleam

of this rebuke in the broad daylight of the Gospel still flashes through each church. There is a task for each man, but where is the man for each task? To-day Christ is calling, Christ is appointing, Christ is commissioning, you and you and each of you. When the Master by the mouth of His ambassador asks you to take a task, do not put him off by pointing to another brother, and referring to him the work. God will take care that others have their places;—hold your own post. A grand co-operative company are those called to this Christian business. There are various departments to be filled in it. Perseverance in enterprise and patience in trial, energetic zeal, and quiet trust, the gifts and the graces,—whatever the order, whether “follow” or “tarry,”—let each take his place, each hold his post. Simon and John have different parts set them, and so have the disciples to-day; but yet are they all co-labourers together with Christ.

“If you cannot with the Reaper
Gather in the heavy sheaves,
You can follow close behind him
Gleaning up the grain he leaves;
It may be along the hedges
Or concealed beside the wall;—
Humbly bending mid the briars
Hang the heaviest heads of all.”

XVII

OUR FALLEN HEROES

A MEMORIAL SERMON

"The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places: how are the mighty fallen!"—II SAMUEL i. 19.

THESE tender and touching words are the opening strain in a hymn of grief, which the great-souled David composed in honour of Saul the king and Jonathan his son, slain together in the decisive and sanguinary battle of Mt. Gilboa. There had been sin in Israel, social wrong, national crime; and the political crisis, consequent, resulted in a conflict of arms. God had drawn His sword,—glittering and bloody war,—to discipline His people; and for a time Philistia prevailed over Israel. But it was permitted only the better to carry out great purposes of good, and the more surely to secure the final triumph of the right.

The text is a wreath of laurel and immortelles, which has lain three thousand years, unwithered and unfading over the sacred dust of the valiant dead. And I take it up, on this occasion, with reverent touch, as a model for a tribute of honour and

garland of gratitude which I would tenderly place on the graves of our own fallen heroes: "How are the mighty fallen! the beauty of the nation slain upon the high places."

And it is appropriate that the surviving soldiers should organize, superior to politics and partisanship, in the common patriotism, to conduct with solemn martial music the procession of the people to the cemeteries in every state and town to strew the floral tribute—"beauty for ashes"—upon the graves of the great and brave dead. Let the air be filled with the fragrant incense in token of faith. Let the green grass blossom with all the colours of the rainbow to betoken immortal hope. Bring wreaths and stars, and crosses and anchors, fair symbols of honour, glory, heroism, patriotism, and religion.

The custom and occasion are calculated to cultivate some of the most exalted sentiments that can animate the human soul:

First. It will nurture in the nation the sentiment of gratitude.

It is by a law of our being, God-implemented, that the exercise of a feeling confirms it. The oftener we recall the memory of the worthy, and the more steadily we exercise sentiments that are noble, the dearer will be the thought, and the deeper the feeling. The memory of our defenders and their valour, fortitude, and sacrifice will revive the grati-

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tude which we ought to cherish and transmit to our children.

Christ was mindful of this principle when He instituted His Memorial Supper. "This do in remembrance of Me."—He knew that "as oft" as His disciples recalled His memory and meditated His character, in the presence of the symbols of His sacrifice, so frequent would be their exercise of gratitude and their growth in many another grace. In like manner this semi-religious Memorial to the martyrs of liberty and union,—those who in a true sense stood in our stead,—will exalt and glorify the lives that were laid down that the Nation might live.

They thought,—they felt,—those brave Boys in Blue,—that the cost of human liberty and national honour was not too high, though at the price of their lives. Some fell in battle; some died in hospital; some returned home broken in health to linger a few months at most amid their loved ones; others have died later in the course of nature; or as the result of exposure; while still others survive, honoured veterans of the Grand Army, to join civilians in these memorials to their departed comrades. Whole corps of them bear starry scars brighter than the signs of rank on a general's epaulet. Full companies carry about bullets in their bodies, and wounds that do not heal; or are crippled in arm or limb or are invalid for a lifetime. While numbers with constitutions equalled only by

their courage, with health as intact as their heroism, give happy promise of gathering honours from two or even three generations, and of filling the eyes of our children and grandchildren, on many a future memorial festival,—as the older ones among us remember how in our childhood on the Fourth of July, with a joy mingled with awe, we gazed on the venerable features and trembling forms of the latest surviving soldiers of the Revolution, till, one by one, they were gone. Those were the fathers of the nation; these are its saviours,—co-equal let them ever be held in the esteem of a loyal and grateful people.

As every Fourth of July, the birthday of the Nation, recalls to memory the valour and sacrifice of the Continental soldiery who, with the loss or offer of their lives, paid the purchase-price of Independence,—so Memorial Day fittingly commemorates the majestic army whose courage and faith maintained the national unity.

And this memorial observance, too, will cultivate in the people the principle of patriotism.

Honours paid to the patriot-dead have partly their impulse in the patriotism of the living. But the remembered patriotism of the departed becomes a new inspiration. The annual pilgrimage to these sacred places on Memorial Day, and the attendant meditation of patriotism upon the manly virtue so associated with the departed, call into exercise a kindred feeling in the living. It ranges our lives

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in the high rank of theirs. It exists as with deeper sympathy, in the cause of country and Union, of Liberty and humanity. It admits us, advances us to a comradeship, in the Grand Army,—not indeed in its Division of Martyrs, but the same patriot spirit of which martyrs and heroes are made. In the day of mortal combat and the awful peril of battle, when the Grand Army was in the field, there was another Army whose swords were ploughshares, and whose spears were pruning-hooks, less ready, it may be, to face the deadly danger, but not less necessary to the country's defence, that supported the Army at the Front, with taxes and bounties, and provisions, and sympathy, and prayer. As the noble army of soldiery, majestic index of a great people's patriotism, had its auxiliaries and reinforcements in the Sanitary and Christian Commissions, equal index of the same great people's philanthropy, so let civilians and veterans in generous emulation and united procession, and moved by a common feeling, honour the memory of our departed comrades. It is the strength of a republic that the citizen may become a soldier, and the soldier does not cease to be a citizen. The liberty-loving people in common with the heroic citizen soldiery are the one full Grand Army of the Republic.

Let all the people in solid column make the peaceful march a sublime National Review; while the tattered battle-flags, torn and stained that the

stain on the Nation's escutcheon might be washed away and the rended Union be knitted together anew, now unfurled again, shall thrill every breast with love, loyalty, and allegiance to the great ideas symbolized in the colours of the Republic: union and freedom, patriotism and humanity.

This Memorial Observance will also enhance the valuation of the results of the war.

Half a million graves annually visited will remind the people how dearly they redeemed the broken Union, and purchased their completer freedom. What has cost the country so many lives must rise to an infinite estimate in all thoughtful minds. The whole nation henceforth will hold these trophies so dear that never again shall they need to be defended unto blood. In the solemn presence of the dead, with hearts bowed before God, let all the people anew devoutly vow adherence to the Declaration of our fathers as read and interpreted by the torch of battle and the light of Providence—and to the Constitution, as it is revised by the high hand of the Lord of Hosts.

And, as annually we stand beside the monuments of the martyrs, a nation of mourners anew, and think of the pride of youth and the beauty of bravery, "slain upon the high places," and sadly soliloquize with the Psalmist, "How are the mighty fallen!" methinks, while we recount the purchase-price, so high, so dear, our heart of hearts will hold more precious than before, sweet, sacred, blessed,

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Divine Peace,—peace, conquest of war,—peace, a right of man,—peace, the gift of God.

Were we summoned to muster to mere military parade, to felicitate each other or exult together over the triumph of arms, and to march in mimic of the “pomp and circumstance of war,” good men might regret the vain display as fanning a vanity of martial ambition unworthy of a civilized people and a Christian Nation.

There is cause to thank God that the war for the Union has left no general festival except this of the sweet and solemn influence, this Floral Memorial, this service of Incense, fragrant with the choicest flowers of feeling:—gratitude, patriotism, freedom, and peace.

We shall go among the graves of our dear and brave dead, not as the Immatics among the tombs before they found Christ; but rather, as afterward, with a calm trust in the right, the true, and the good,—sitting at the feet of Jesus clothed and in our right mind. The day of national gathering shall in a sense renew the magnificent spectacle of the uprising of a great People, but the muster shall not be amid the flash of the sabre and the gleam of the bayonet, the shriek of the bombs and the roar of the batteries, the lightning and thunder of the dread storm of war and the awful cyclone of carnage. No; our memorial marching shall be under arches that bear the colours of the rainbow, and that shed the radiance of flowers, the bow in the

cloud that betokens the calm after the storm,—after the deluge of blood, the returning smile of God.

Bring, then, bring flowers. Let them be wrought into the symbols of the truest and tenderest sentiments. Or, sprinkle them as incense upon the carved marble and the grassy mound, as on sacred altars of faith. Bring them lavishly, bountifully,—a tribute of gratitude to heroism,—a tribute of loyalty to patriotism,—a tribute of fidelity to martyrdom,—a tribute of religion to God.

And, honoured survivors of the Grand Army, fellow citizens of the Great Republic, should there be a lonely grave of any who fought in Gray in the circuit of our cemeteries, lay there a wreath in tribute to kindred bravery, and in token of reconciliation. It has been done on the other side. The Army that conquered in arms will not be outdone in the spirit of charity, forgiveness, and magnanimity. Many of the rank and file of the Confederates learned their mistake too late, and responded with their hearts with General Lee to our victorious Commander Grant when he sent the message, "Let us have peace." Yes, let us have peace. Let us be one people. Let us henceforth know no section. Let us be one Nation, from the Lakes to the Gulf and from sea to sea,—one people whose God is the Lord, a Christian Nation, great in territory, greater in manhood, and greatest of all in Christian char-

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acter. Then shall we lead the procession of the Nations when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign whose right it is to rule, from sea to sea, and from pole to pole.

XVIII

FOR THANKSGIVING

1869.

I HAVE not thought it equal to the dignity of this day to follow the stereotype style of Thanksgiving sermon, and speak of barns crowded with hay, bins overflowing with grain, and presses bursting forth with new wine;—to congratulate you on having enough to eat and to be clothed withal. “Our Heavenly Father knoweth that we have need of all these things”; and we feel a constant thankfulness. During seed-time I preached concerning the Divine Agency in the Earth’s productions. And now the fair vernal promise is fulfilled in rich Autumnal harvests. But to-day when I give thanks, my hand is not upon my stomach, but on my heart. I take not the theme of food though it comes from God, but the theme of freedom, the fruit of religion; as our Lord’s prayer is: “Thy Kingdom come,” before it asks: “Give us this day our daily bread.”

On this day of National religious festival,—a day appointed not only by the Governor of the State, but by the Chief Magistrate of the Nation, for public thanksgiving and praise,—the subject I

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have chosen for the occasion has seemed specially pertinent both in view of the origin of the custom and its present observance.

The text which gives me my theme is:

REVELATION i. 6.—*"And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."*

When God devised the Gospel, He made it broad enough to apply to every human relation, and to pervade the whole nature of man. There is no part of our life so minute that Christianity does not encompass it, and no social want so comprehensive that the Christian religion does not include it. It elevates the equalities of individuals, and the relations of nations, and is the heaven for their elevation and improvement alike. And all true personal improvement and national progress have their basis and foundation in the spirit of Christianity.

Let us realize then, the right sense of the text, and cherish it to the spirit of Democratic Liberty, which is the basis and soul of our national life. The coming of Jesus to us by subject these two civilizations

to the principles of *Christianity* and
to the *principles of Popular Sovereignty*.
It is the *text* which *hath made us kings*."

It is only by doing the true value of man. It is only by the word such a revelation of the *truth* of the human race as places a *re-*
lation upon the *relations* of oppression in high

places, and at the same time is the inspiration of hope to the lowly. And just in proportion as Christianity has spread and been understood, has there been established among mankind a right self-estimate in each, and the mutual right estimate of one another. Christianity strips all fictitious valuations from individuals, all extraneous circumstance, as family, or property, or position, or power, and forms its estimate of human nature not from "the accidental but the essential." There is but one family of true royalty, with kingly prerogative by "Divine right"; and that is the family of Man.

As this view of manhood, which pervades the New Testament from Matthew to Revelation, has gradually come to pervade human history, from the age of the Roman Empire to the era of the American Republic, men's social and civil relations have been revolutionized to their average improvement and gradual progress. Where tyranny has resisted the spirit of Christianity, the progress has been attended by shocks. Despots who have resolved to hold their position by standing upon the necks of their subjects have felt the earthquake heaving beneath their feet, and their tyrannous pretensions have toppled down. Electricity when transmitted through a perfect medium is invisible and noiseless and harmless; indeed it can be made to carry messages of social fraternity, national prosperity, and international good-will. But where

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the connection is broken or a resisting medium intervenes, there the flash is seen and the stroke is felt. So the government which is an utter non-conductor of the Divine lightning of natural liberty, will see the lurid gleam of revolution and feel the terrific shock of the thunderbolt of war; and that manhood which Christianity has made known will be bravely vindicated in the battle and the blood, and that liberty wherewith Christ hath made men free, though at the further cost of human offering, be at length secured. But those governments which read the signs of the times, by the sign of Christ which is as the lightning that cometh out of the East and shineth even unto the West, wisely and gracefully make concessions to the demands of the national manhood,—demands for enlarged popular privilege and political liberty; or, approaching still nearer to the spirit of the Gospel, make voluntary offers of reform, until that liberty which is “where the spirit of the Lord is,” prevails in the land and pervades its law. And as the fulness of the truth, Christ’s grand Ideal, the Brotherhood of Man, has penetrated through all grades and strata of society from the king of absolute rule to the serf in his abject toil, and monarch and subject have been drawn together by the silver links of Christian sympathy in a common humanity, in that ratio and to that degree have rulers been educated, and the people claimed the natural rights of man. Governments are the indices of Christian

civilization. A people who have learned the first lesson of God's estimate of man,

"will know their rights
And, knowing, dare maintain."

And rulers and people will know their mutual dependence. As the ocean sends up mists to fill the fountain, so the fountain should send forth streams to replenish the ocean. The people who in the school of Christ have become most versed in the problem of relative moral values, will be as ready to accord the rights of others as to assert their own.

The problem to be solved was one of human progress; the Christian element in our civilization alone affords the solution. The blackboard of the past has been written over with trials at this question. Some rulers have mistaken it for a question of exchequer,—how to replenish the royal treasury; and oppression and spoliation fill up their columns of figures. Others have confounded it with a problem in geometry, how to extend the national boundaries; and wars of conquest and their dreadful cost are the figures which their work affords. Other nations with their governments have properly apprehended the problem; and with statesmanship directed steadily toward national improvement and human amelioration have rapidly advanced toward the grand answer, the best estate of man.

Let us read in the last series some of the results which the Anglo-Saxon has reached in working out

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the acquisition of native, inalienable freedom, and civil and national liberty. The work is traced in white, clear lines and bold large strokes, with crayons that were cut from the chalk-cliffs of England.

The first important reform toward freedom in England was when Henry First thought it expedient to remedy grievances. The second was when Stephen, his successor, was constrained to make similar concessions. The third was when Henry Second, confirming these, granted several additions. But these were rather advances in the privileges of the nobility, than in the liberty of the people. It was not until John the spendthrift and the profligate, ascended the throne, that the outraged nation rose and wrested from their king that great state-paper, Magna Charta. It was a blow at the throne, — not so overthrow it, but that from it, as from the rock struck by the rod of God, there might leap living waters to strengthen the wearied and to refresh the thirsty.

"The essential clauses of Magna Charta," says Hallam, "are those which protect the personal liberty and property of all freemen, by giving security from arbitrary imprisonment and arbitrary spoliation."

But the Great Charter was important most as a precedent. It contained no right of greater import than that which it took for granted,—namely, the right to maintain a right,—which, though after-

ward often denied by the sovereign, was never surrendered by the subject. Thus the British Government was changed from an Absolute to a Limited Monarchy. And in the same century, representation gained place,—the House of Commons was beginning to take form.

But the struggle had only begun,—the “irrepressible conflict” between royal prerogative and popular rights. The crisis came in the execution of Charles Stuart, and liberty in England reached a high mark under the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell. And though the tide subsided in the succession, though the monarchy was restored in a Stuart, though there were fluctuations of freedom, yet the spirit of that revolution affected for the better the genius of the British Government, and the principles for which Hampden died and Milton lived, are throbbing still in the successive reforms of the present century.

But the glory of that nation is that she is the parent of the American republic. (No thanks to the government, to be sure, but thanks to the spirit of the people.) The same spirit which inspired the Ironsides and impelled them to victory had wafted the Mayflower across the Atlantic, bearing the nest-egg of a new nation, New England: they took no other name, but the *old* things were to become *new*. The young government which was brought to birth on the 4th of July a century and a half later, sprang from the same parentage that begot


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the protectorate. The Pilgrim Fathers were the contemporaries of Oliver Cromwell. It was the "manifest destiny" of the young Government to be a Republic.

There are four great periods, therefore, in the building of the Temple of our kindred English and American Liberty. The Great Charter formed the foundation; the House of Commons laid the floor; the Commonwealth of Cromwell set up the columns; and the Declaration of Independence put on the dome,—like the canopy of the skies, broad enough not only to cover the continent, but to invite under its vast pavilion the discontented and the oppressed of every race and every tongue.

Now he reads history carelessly who cannot trace this progressive development of English-American freedom to the same spirit that kindled the great Reformation; they are parts of the same Divine argument in the logic of events. Guizot has shown in his "Philosophy of History," that in the grand advance of society from the sixteenth century forward, in freedom of thought and liberty of law, it was Christian thinkers that led the van. "In the sixteenth century," he says, "in the heart of religious society, an insurrection broke out against the system of pure ecclesiastical monarchy, against absolute power in the spiritual order. This evolution produced, sanctioned, and established freedom of inquiry in Europe. [It was attended] a similar event in civil society. Absolute tem-

poral power was attacked and overcome. You see, then, that the two orders of society have undergone the same vicissitudes and revolutions; *only, religious society has always been the foremost in this career.*" This is the language of the great philosophic historian of modern civilization. And I but gather up the results of his masterly study when I say that, from the time when, on the ruins of the Roman Empire, God's providence brought together Christianity and Barbarism to be blended as elements of the new civilization,—Christianity with its Divine estimate of man, and the Barbarians with their unrestrained spirit of native independence,—just as fast as the *Christian* inspirations of liberty could leaven the *native* impulses of freedom, just so fast society was elevated and civilization advanced. And, when the clergy became tempted and corrupted by temporal power, when pastors became magistrates, and bishops despots, until religion seemed overborne by ambition, the leaven was even then fermenting toward the Reformation, till at last the pent up spirit of Christianity burst the shackles of a corrupt ecclesiasticism; and when the manacles were struck from the soul, those on the body were broken also. Church polity and State-politics successively felt the reform; and faith and thought and law alike are free. And this process is still going on. Christ's kingdom is coming in civil governments; and our own free republic is the noblest national fruit yet produced by the Christian



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faith; it is Christ "that . . . hath made us kings."

Let us, then, consider, secondly, *the Responsibilities of our Popular Sovereignty and Citizenship.*

We are not only made kings, but also, in virtue of that power, are made "*priests unto God.*" We are a "royal priesthood."

And first the sceptre of the ballot is put into our hands for great moral ends. It is a moral power that is deposited with the people. The right to vote is not a natural but a civil right which Christianity has made practicable. Just as any two persons entering into co-partnership have the right to exclude a third party, provided they do not seize his capital to help run their firm; so any people in adopting a form of government may make such naturalization laws as they like, provided none thus made alien are thereby wronged in property or person. It is this idea that underlies the property qualification: No-taxation-no-representation. It does not inflict a wrong, while it recognizes a right. Intelligence, a residence long enough to become acquainted with the nature of the government, and ability to read the ballot which is cast, form another qualification which the state has a right to require. The common school has something to do with the security of our free institutions. All right-minded men will agree that the danger from too stringent suffrage-laws is at least no greater than from those

that are too loose,—as the moral anarchy, the municipal corruption, and almost an established church in New York City sadly and sufficiently prove. Woman suffrage is to be favoured, and is defensible, not on the ground that it is a natural right, but because the property of women pays taxes, and ought to, and because woman's moral instincts and sympathies often guide her aright, where man's reason and logic oft lead him wrong. Dr. Bushnell calls this the "Reform against Nature"; the particular nature of woman, if it has anything to do with the question, entitles her to the right, her peculiar moral acuteness making her a safe depository of this power.

Now this civil right of suffrage, this sceptre of our sovereignty, placed in our hands by the spirit of Christianity, involves a corresponding obligation; the power is accompanied by appropriate responsibility. Each man who casts a ballot, each citizen-king who sways this sceptre, should bear in mind his "royal *priesthood*," and exert his kingly prerogative as a "priest to God."

Our government separates church and state; but it does not divorce religion from citizenship. It is a fatal fallacy to confound one of these facts with the other. Let the government keep politics out of religion; but let the citizen put as much religion into politics as possible. Though moral questions seldom directly come up for our suffrage, they are yet constantly involved in our political decisions,

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THE DEATH OF CONSCIENCE: fidelity to conscience and
truth: the motto of our manhood is to be true to
conscience. We have never been called upon to
vote a more moral quality of dishonesty, but we
have voted on a political question of *repudiation*
which involved that crime on a giant scale. We
were never asked to decide by ballot as to the sin-
fulness of slavery—demanding a man of all the
strength he has his time and his toil—but we voted
yes and over on measures which involved that
“*sum of all villainies*.” We shall never be asked
to cast a ballot as to the sin of unchastity; but ques-
tions of polygamy await our decision. We may
never be asked for our ballot as to the criminality of
making men drunk, and women and children; but
again and again our suffrage is exercised on ques-
tions of license and prohibition. And how often
are we recreant to our royal-priestly trusts; and
while we exercise our political sovereignty, abdicate
our moral manhood. I know that legislation must
needs represent public sentiment, and that laws
passed in advance of the popular moral tone are
likely to lie dead letters upon the statute book.
But a paper blockade is better than open ports to
a deadly enemy. A manly protest in the form of
statute, though it never be executed, has a better
moral influence than craven silence. Let the book
be written even if it must be sealed up. God will
bring the time when there shall be one worthy to
break the seals. Without action and agitation

there is little instruction in political morals. Experience is the best teacher both in principles and expediency. Has it been tried and found wanting? After three years and a half of bloody drawn battles, the war for the Union was denounced a "failure"; but six months more refuted the falsehood. Tested by results up to the present time, Southern reconstruction is an utter blunder. I tell you it will take a generation to heal that gash. Give prohibition, made sufficiently strong, a fair trial, say twenty years, and if it does not, with the grog-shops, close also our jails and our criminal courts, it will make noble approaches toward it. Statistics of intemperance sustain the statement. I profess no prophetic foresight; it is a simple sum in arithmetic. "But that is the very point," perhaps it is replied, "a trial of twenty years is hopeless of attainment." A moral reform hopeless of attainment? Its coming is written in the moral sense of men, which, kindled by the Holy Spirit, is the living law of God. But you mean "Immediately." That is the counsel of cowards. Is it far off? That is a reason the earlier to act. "But the manner of the action," you answer; "that is the question." What is God's method? For four thousand years, in every successive generation, each commandment of the Decalogue has been transgressed; but they are unrepealed; there they stand on the inspired statute-book, God's ten-fold protest against sin,—from of old,—and for every age.

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And there is a prohibitory liquor law written here,—the earliest measure of the kind on record. Leviticus x. 8, 9, and 10 reads:

“And the Lord spake unto Aaron, saying, Do not drink wine, nor strong drink,—thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die; it shall be a statute forever, throughout your generations; And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean.”

This prohibition, though limited to the time of service in the tabernacle, covered the whole public function of the high-priest and his assistant priests. If we had a law as good as that, it would greatly cleanse our elections,—a law to prevent men from casting their ballots when they are so drunk that they know not the “difference . . . between unclean and clean,”—cannot discern the line of moral distinctions.

But, my Christian friends and fellow citizens, friends of good morals and of humanity, we live in the broader light of the Gospel, and ours therefore is a “royal priesthood” of larger responsibility. Let us not hesitate to fulfil all its functions, for the public good.

But again we are “priests unto God” not merely within the range of our suffrage, but in the larger sense of citizenship,—not only in our right to vote, but by virtue of our abode. Our civil freedom is the world’s arena for the better exercise and athletic development of our moral manhood, as the appointed co-agents of God. These institutions that, in

their origin, have such direct relations with religion, have religious interests also in their intention and destiny. The French Revolution failed, though started in the interests of freedom, because the people discerned not the difference between a corrupt church and the Divine truth. They even dared to repeal God's law, and actually performed religious orgies to the goddess, a false goddess of liberty. They were not content with demolishing the compact of church and state, but crucified the Faith of Christ. The interpretation of the Reign of Terror was National Atheism! When France awoke from that horrid nightmare with a confused and oppressive consciousness of its hideous vision—wherein the souls of the living, and headless ghosts and forms of men, erect and bent, a Lafayette and a Robespierre, the noblest and the worst, in intricate contradiction, and bewildering whirl, appeared and vanished and appeared again—when the nation awoke, it was with an aching brain, and a weight on the heart,—*and Liberty had fled.*

We have had our national nightmare. And practical atheism explains it. An aged negro woman, when in Boston she saw Burns kidnapped to be carried back to bondage, asked: "Is God dead?" Ah! The Nation has learned that He lives. Five hundred thousand lives of freemen sacrificed! Yet the heart of the martyr President said: "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether"; and the people in sobbing

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response, said "Amen." The discipline was received, and liberty was not lost.

But the nation must carry its scars for a generation at least; it will take time for distrust and resentment to die out of the Southern mind; and the enormous public debt cannot be liquidated in a single Administration. But an honest Executive is redeeming his pledge; and his first year diminishes the debt one hundred millions of dollars,—a rate of payment which will remove the whole in half a generation, or, according to Boutwell's Philadelphia speech, fourteen years. And when the whole column of figures is taken down from the topmost to the foundation stone, may no other monument to iniquity require to be built. If the Chinese question tempts, let the nation resist and be just. Private cupidity and treachery already oppress these people with the patient eyes. May the Nation remember the negro. God is alive forevermore. In His sight the yellow Asiatic is as precious as the African black.

Public fidelity is a prerequisite to national prosperity. And religion is the safeguard of liberty.

The Fathers of the Republic made utterance of this truth; but among them, it was Franklin the philosopher that said: "He who shall introduce into public affairs the principles of primitive Christianity will change the face of the world." May our Freedom and our Faith hasten in their journey 'round the earth, to lead the processions of the na-

tions in that march of progress millennial, universal, when "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ. And He shall reign for ever and ever."

Hildebrand had a grand ambition—that of subduing kings and princes in universal submission to the Papal supremacy. But the aspiration of each sovereign-priest of the American Republic should be to extend to all the world that "Liberty wherewith Christ hath made men free,"—to bring in the Reign Divine on Earth, "King of kings and Lord of lords."

"Sail on, Sail on, O Ship of State!
Sail on, O Union, strong and great!
Humanity with all its fears,
With all the hopes of future years,
Is hanging breathless on thy fate!
We know what Master laid thy keel,
What Workmen wrought thy ribs of steel,
Who made each mast, and sail, and rope,
What anvils rang, what hammers beat,
In what a forge and what a heat
Were shaped the anchors of thy hope!
Fear not each sudden sound and shock,
'Tis of the wave and not the rock;
'Tis but the flapping of the sail,
And not a rent made by the gale!
In spite of rock and tempests' roar,
In spite of false lights on the shore,
Sail on, nor fear to breast the sea!
Our hearts, our hopes, are all with thee,
Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,
Our faith triumphant o'er our fears,
Are all with thee,—are all with thee!"

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SACRAMENTS OF THE CHURCH, THE HOUSE OF THE CHURCH, THE HOUSE OF THE CHURCH,
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THE late Rev. Dr. Swanwick of Philadelphia, in his masterly and extensive edition upon "The Atonement" has however pre-empted the subject against the approach of others, unless with the faint sense of intellectual trespass of the humiliating consciousness of gathering but a mere pebble of reasoning from a well-invested field.

But I went with a worse guilt and a heavier shame for a Minister of the Gospel returning from a home voyage across the Great Deep to show himself by silence incapable of any response to such of the profound impressions of the Sea, and of first conception of the universal presence and power, and general recognition of the abiding goodness and love of God.

The preacher's text-book, too, contains many a passage concerning the Sea,—God's Creation of it, His Presence upon it, and Control over it, whose full meaning only unfolds to those actually upon the waters, face to face and hand to hand with the facts. Written from personal observation, they are to be apprehended through a corresponding experience. When one reads these words on ship-board in mid-ocean, he first feels an adequate conception and the blessed satisfaction of their significance: "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters"; "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further"; "He maketh the storm a calm"; "Even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me." These inspired thoughts find response in every devout heart, when tossed upon the deep.

Every one feels a charm in the Sea. There is a certain fascination in it that attracts men to the shore, and entices upon the ocean.

It would be difficult fully to describe the feeling, —to analyze the pleasure into its various elements. There is no object over which the mind may so muse, amazed, or more vaguely meditate. Its unity seems to exclude analysis, while its breadth, its vastness defies and baffles the attempt to grasp and master it. And some minds settle into this single feeling, *A Sense of Its Immensity*. On land the horizon is nigher for the uplifted hills. But looking out upon the sea, space expands, hori-

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zones recede, continents dip below the vision and sink from sight,—thought with no great effort walks over the surface, and measures the reaches of three thousand miles. And to these, this is all there is of the Sea.

There are *others who are impressed with its restlessness*. Its broad bosom heaving and throbbing as if with a life within itself, or responding to every changing sky, now raging with mighty passion, anon rippling with quiet laughter. And in these moods of the Sea the mind finds a transcript of itself, a sympathy of nature, a companionship, friendship, kinship that pleases whether it excites or soothes the mind.

Still others are impressed with the *power of the Sea*. They stand on shore and watch the great waves as they roll upon the coast; or on ship, where, lifted upon the mighty billows, the sense of awe verges into that of the sublime, and very fear takes the form of joy. It is one of the highest pleasures to witness a display of power.

But that which impressed me above all these was the *Obedience of the Sea*.

From the Creation when "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters," as a skilful horseman breathes into the nostrils of his steed, the Sea has felt His constraint and yielded to the rein. Restive and spirited indeed, but broken to constant control, she draws the chariots of commerce and international fellowship from continent

to continent. The law of God by which He hath harnessed the waters, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further," ever suggested itself most impressively as I watched the regularity and uniformity, the fidelity and constancy, with which the waters pressing for their level underneath the ship lifted it over every billow. I watched this work for hours of devout and grateful meditation until what was the truth indeed became real to me,—that God attended our steamer and with two great hands, applied by His natural law, on either side the ship, lifted us wave by wave till we anchored safely in the Clyde, or brought us "Home again." When, on the return voyage, we encountered the storm which a telegram from this side had predicted, and in the midst of it two weeks ago to-day, and about this hour, the mainsail was rent by the blast and we "shipped a great sea," which dashed over the hurricane deck twenty-five feet above the water-line, and, rolling over the skylights, produced darkness in the music saloon, and the lips of women quivered, and men said they would not hanker again after foreign travel,—I was a stranger to all such feeling, partly from temperament, but largely from trust; for I had read in God's word, and in the volume of waters,—the only thing written in water that is forever legible,—the Divine truthfulness, written in all the uniformities of Nature, legible in every law of God. The waves that broke over the bow, and dashed foaming upon the

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upper deck, were but the froth blown from the nostrils of the steed, while his strong body as with living energy steadily upheld and pressed sturdily against the storm, constrained by that Hand that slacks not the rein since the day He said: "Here shall thy proud waves be stayed." It is difficult to impart the idea,—it were impossible to convey the impression,—the sense of restfulness, of confidence, of trust in God's truth, in God's love. I could appreciate the words of the poet in the simple song:

"Rocked in the Cradle of the deep,
I lay me down in peace to sleep;"

When in due time, after a day and a half, the gale had passed, and the sea, meantime maintaining its equilibrium in God's changeless law, regained its level, only the words of the Psalmist could adequately express it: "He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still."

For a whole week, the rest of our trip, in response to a serene and benign sky, the sea was one vast smile. But to a devout soul it was but the reflection of the smile of God. Through all, in storm and calm, neath cloud and sun, the Obedience of the Sea to the law of its being brought ever to mind the Author of both,—who created the sea and decreed the law. If only the soul could so obey, and fulfil its appointed place as well! The inanimate may teach the intelligent!

But the relation of the soul to its Maker is closer and dearer than that of the Sea. The Psalmist, upon the waters, perceived a law uniting the Divine to human life; and rose to one of his highest flights of song, and widest views of truth, when lifting his voice, and striking his harp above the deep, he sang this grand strain:

"I take the wings of the morning,
Dwell in the uttermost parts of the Sea;
Even there shall Thy hand lead me;
And Thy right hand shall hold me."

The royal singer here simply recognizes the abiding care of God for His Child;—not necessarily to rescue him from danger, to shield him from shipwreck, to save him from physical death. But the Psalmist's thought is, that with his hand in God's all would be well in any event,—his true and real safety was assured. He names a variety of circumstances in which he may be situated, and mentions last as a climax, being tossed in mid-ocean, and for the very reason that it is a place of danger;—and then adds, "Even there," "in the uttermost parts of the sea" the true soul is safe. Professor Newcomb, in his address at St. Louis, before the American Association for the Advancement of Science, quotes "the remark of a satirical philosopher" on witnessing the offerings made by the survivors of a stormy voyage to the heathen deity supposed to control the deep: "I see," said he, "no

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gins from those who were lost!" There is a want of fairness in this quotation, especially in its implication. Very different is the Christian's trust in the Divine care. It was Satan who taught that a believer might leap from the top of a pinnacle with impunity. Christ rebuked him for the false doctrine. And to the same intent was our Saviour's teaching concerning those who were killed by the falling of the tower of Siloam. Those who were killed were not thereby condemned, nor those who escaped thereby approved. The teaching of the New Testament is not that the trustful are saved from danger, from suffering, from accidents through the operation of natural laws, from physical death; but rather, and on the contrary, it is the glory of the Gospel that Christian faith saves *in* danger, *in* suffering, in physical extremity, in the hour and article of death. "To be or not to be, that is the question." When one has settled it for himself that there is a God, and that there is a soul, and that the two are related as the Father and the Child, on the ground of elements had in common between them of intelligence and character, the conclusion of the highest reason is an implicit trust that "All things work together for good to them that love God."

XX

THE LAST MESSAGE

(When he reached home after preaching this sermon, its author was exhausted. He had long been bearing up, beyond his strength. Without doubt, in selecting the theme, he had been guided by the consciousness that the end of his work was very near,—that his burden must soon fall on younger shoulders. This proved to be in fact his last sermon.)

"I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one."—I JOHN ii. 14.

TO the thoughtful mind and the devout heart, what an object of interest is a strong young man,—interest in thinking and feeling what he may *be* and what he may *do*. A youth just arrived at maturity, a life just ripened into manhood, how momentous!—An immortal soul, an engine of force, brought to the decision and inception of his life-purpose and his life work. And throughout the whole period of vigorous manhood, as long as one remains young and strong, the question still is asked with intensest interest and earnest concern as to *what he is and how he does*.

Upon this text I purpose to speak of the Importance of Christian young men, to the cause of

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Christ; and to make an Appeal to the young men of this place to enlist in the work of the church.

That stage of life which is most endowed with power is the most important. It was with this thought and this feeling,—with an earnest and yearning interest,—that John, the Apostle, when he penned this letter, sent a special message to the young men, in congratulation that they had enlisted in the ranks of the church and in behalf of Christ. He wrote indeed to the “little children,” and unto “the fathers” in the churches, but his words to neither of these classes have that interest which is manifest in his communication to the “young men.” The “little children” had not yet reached the years when they could assume the responsibility of Christian enterprise or endure the burden of church-work; and the aged “fathers” had passed by their day, their strength for toil had gone, and soon the mantle must fall from their shoulders wholly;—but the “young men,”—oh, it is they that sustain the cause “because they are strong,”—the young men, who in firmness of purpose are the “pillars of the church,”—the young men, in whose vigour of life and devotion of work “the word of God abides” in the world.

Ah! doubtless John remembers how, when himself a young man (by tradition the youngest of the twelve), he gave his life to Christ and his labour to the church. John doubtless remembers that all whom Christ called that He might send them, all

whom He appointed to the Apostleship, all upon whom He imposed a special work in His Church, were men essentially young, men still in their full prime. John doubtless remembers above all that Christ Himself was a young man when He accomplished His momentous mission for mankind. Edwin P. Whipple in one of his most instructive lectures argues and illustrates the proposition that almost everything great that has been done in the world has been the work of young men. But one need not go into secular history to find examples. One need not cite from military annals the name of an Alexander of Macedon who conquered the civilized world and died at thirty-three; nor a Frederick of Prussia who at a similar age laid the foundation for his nation's present greatness. The records of the church supply a nobler roll. Indeed it were scarcely true, in the best sense, to call a work great that were not also good. Alexander was a royal Freebooter, and died a drunkard in a terrible debauch. Frederick, too, was a robber of realms and while a patron of learning lived an infidel and wrought what he might to demoralize the German mind. But Christ, as young, conquered a kingdom by winning hearts,—His realm extends wherever prevails the Golden Rule, and He shall yet come to govern the world by the law of love. The Life to which John gave his whole heart,—the Lord under whose leadership he enlisted in the full, fresh vigour of his young manhood—is the patron and

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promoter of all that is valuable to man. Yes! Christianity is the liberator and enlightener of mankind.

No wonder that, in a work so important, "help was laid upon One that was mighty,"—no wonder that in His first fresh, strong young manhood, the government was upon His shoulders. And no wonder that the "Wonderful, the Counsellor" called a John the Beloved, a Paul the Great, a Timothy the Faithful, as soon as they had fairly passed their boyhood, to become co-workers in His cause.

The church has indeed a place for childhood and old age. As a home, it has ample room for the youngest and the oldest. It receives the little ones and tries, if it is true to its trust, to train them in truth, in integrity, and in helpfulness. And it retains the aged;—it affords them, when it is true to its trust, a calm retreat, sympathetic society, solace in sickness, in decline, and pain, and so smoothes their path to the grave;—and gently and tenderly it conducts them through the door of death to their eternal home.

And indeed some think that this is the chief function of the church. It is in this false view that many youth who have been connected with the Sunday School quit it when they have grown to manhood. And it is in this false view, too, that many grown men, mature men, shun the church influence, and often its Sabbath services, till the middle of life, till even far past their prime, and

then come back not so much to reinforce the church, as to find in it a retreat. A Christian welcome to them. God's blessing for them. Driven and beaten on life's voyage, unsatisfied and disappointed in their expectations from the world, let them come to the church that it may bear them to the desired haven,—let them lay hold of the Christian's hope,—an anchor of the soul.

But what I want to teach to-day, what I would impress upon the youth and the young men present, as the important lesson of the text, is that there is a most vital relation between young manhood and Christianity, between life's prime and Christ's church and its work. Salvation in Christ means something besides dying a Christian,—it means living a Christian. It is the years of vigour that are of most value in Christian devotedness. It is the prime of life and the strength of maturity that can bring first fruits in offerings to the Lord. The church is not merely a hospital, it is an army in the conflict. It is much more than a retreat for the maimed, the halt, and the blind; it is a society of the able-bodied, the right-minded, and the true-hearted banded together to teach the truth and to do good. And you young men ought to enlist in it, "because you are strong." By the very fact of your young manhood, in very virtue of your strength of purpose and resoluteness of endeavour, and capacity and power to do, ought your life in this its prime, in the highest conviction of principle,

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to be given to the work of the church and the service of Christ. Every young man ought to have strong convictions and steadfast principles so right and true that they will stand the test of Christ. And every such strong young man is in that fact elected of God to do some true and good work in the church, and ought by natural selection of himself to come to Christ and into His church to do that work. The Young Men's Christian Associations are Christ's modern apostleship to the large cities and the considerable villages. And good has been done abundantly both among the young men thus associated, in keeping them from the evil by a devotion to the good, and still more among others in their protection or rescue from the haunts of vice and the paths of sin. And no live village, large or little, should be without its band of young men who "because they are strong" become the chiefest auxiliary of the church, nay, a constituent part of it, its alert and working force, its own fresh, best life. More than the pastor, more than the faithful older members, may young people be influential in winning to their number and enlisting in their work, those that are younger as they grow up to their years.

If some of the young men present could but realize how the tide of young life is setting downward where it meets no counter force in Christ, where if they would take the right stand they could stay it or turn it, there would be no lack of courage

in taking up the cause, and in standing for Christ. If you young men who have not yet joined the nucleus of young men in the church around which must be gathered the growing youth,—if you will but reflect how the Devil has got the long arm of the lever to heave you all over, you will stand aghast at your indifference. Let me have the liberty of an old friend to exhort you to reach up a hand to clasp firmly the Hand of Christ, and stretch out a hand to reach and save your associates. Holding onto Christ, cling to one another that all may be upheld.

Here, my young friends, is something worthy of the truest and strongest manhood. I appeal not to self-love simply, to save yourselves. There is room for disinterestedness, you may help to save others. You are not ready, because you are not fit? Very well; and none are fit. But forget yourselves in rescuing your friends. And in losing your life, you shall find it; in giving it you shall keep it unto life eternal.

IN MEMORIAM

(Part of the Sermon Preached at the Funeral of George W. Fisher, Friday, July 25, 1884)

By the REV. E. O. BARTLETT

"And they glorified God in me."—GALATIANS i. 24.

"WHO," said Paul to the Corinthians, "maketh thee to differ from another?" "What hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" It was therefore a source of great satisfaction to the apostle that those who perceived and duly estimated his native and acquired gifts, did not give him the glory, but Christ. And thus he was ever quick to rebuke the strong tendencies of the world to give the glory to the instrumental rather than to the efficient cause. All true Christians sympathize with the apostle in these feelings. They cannot endure the thought that their fellow men should give them credit for gifts or graces, for the possession and exercise of which, they are wholly indebted to God.

And yet we should dwell upon the good that men have done, as encouragements to noble living and earnest Christian activity. This Paul did to strengthen his own faith, and to increase his own

zeal, as well as that of the church and of all succeeding generations. In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, he cites many of the ancient worthies, dwelling in glowing terms upon the heroes of the Hebrew church, "of whom the world was not worthy."

And this is our privilege, nay our duty to-day as we stand in this solemn presence. We should be false to ourselves, false to this church, to this community,—nay, to our God,—did we not, in reviewing the life of George W. Fisher, dwell upon his sweet and pure character, his exemplary life, and his many virtues. His life is peculiarly and intimately identified with this people and has, for us all, lessons that it will be good for us to learn by heart.

I measure my words, when I say there is not one in all this community who knew this dear brother, when he walked in and out these streets, when he went among you so blamelessly—nay, I think you will say "without spot, blemish, wrinkle, or any such thing,"—there is not one in all the length and breadth of this town who is not ready to do him honour and drop a tear over his grave. This great audience here has a meaning. It is an unmistakable testimony to the high estimate you all put upon him who now lies before us cold in death.

This community owes a debt to the effective, earnest, and loving labours of George W. Fisher. I will not now speak of his relations to this church,

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of his faithful services in the day of small things when a few gathered in yonder hall,—of his agency in the building of this model house of worship, beautiful for situation,—the joy of the whole community,—nor of the steady and healthful growth that followed under his long pastorate. I wish to speak of the deceased as a public-spirited citizen, as a man of broad views and enlightened ideas, engaging heart and soul in every good enterprise, in all that affected the higher interests of this community, active in the establishment of the High School. So earnest was he that he gave his own time and labours, as a teacher of the ancient languages, without financial compensation. And this was only a single illustration of the spirit that was in him. He was a very generous man. He gave of his small means without stint. From a human standpoint he gave too much.

The public-spirited life, the earnest, faithful, pastorate life, the silent, unseen, unostentatious life of George W. Fisher was not a garment put on; it was the fibre of his entire being, mind, body, and soul. Says one, who during the twelve years of his Peace Dale pastorate knew him intimately in sickness and in health, in sorrow and in joy, in prosperity and adversity: "I can with truth say of him (what I can say of no other person) that I never heard an unkind, a repining, a selfish word from his lips."

If I should try to sum up his virtues I feel that

I could best express them by the one word "purity." The Psalmist describes just such a man when he says, "He that hath clean hands and a pure heart." Many persons live pure lives because reason and conscience tell them it is right so to live. He lived a pure life because any other was utterly impossible to him. The fountain was clean, the overflow could not be unclean.

Faith, which so many try to define, and so many more fail to comprehend, save as a word, was to him what it was to one of old: "*la substance*." It seems to me he can scarcely be nearer his Father to-day than he has been during these years of his earthly life. Constant communion with God brought heaven so near him—there seemed often in his case to be no need for hope, since he was as one who had attained.

An exceedingly nervous and delicate physical organization rendered him very sensitive on many points where a coarser nature would have been utterly indifferent. Harsh words, unkind acts, surly looks, ever gave him acute pain and left wounds so deep and sore that, could the cruelest eye have looked into that pure, true, loving heart, fewer wounds would have been inflicted there.

And yet, a distinguishing trait of his character was courage—that courage that springs from a consciousness of rectitude. No matter how the tortured flesh might shrink, his soul never faltered. No path of duty was too dark for those feet, shod

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with the "Preparation of the gospel of peace." No battle with evil was fearful enough to affright that heart, shielded by the "Breastplate of righteousness."

In the service of God he waged an uncompromising and constant warfare against sin. Sin he hated; hated more intensely than a less pure soul can possibly imagine. But the poor victim of sin he loved with a love so all embracing that I verily believe he would make any sacrifice, even his own life (ah, he has made that now), if by so doing he could help one poor brother man to shake off the yoke of sin. His tender Christian courtesy was shown to everyone alike, since in every human being—no matter how distorted the original may have been—he saw one made in the image of God.

His dear old mother (gone home now) used to tell that when she took this least lamb of her large flock to church for the first time, he glided softly from her side and made his way to the pulpit where the white-haired pastor laid his hand on the little head as though in benediction. "That," she used to say, "was when George was ordained." On the day that he was outwardly made a minister of God's word, she sent him a Bible with this motto: "From a child thou hast known the scriptures." His brothers and sisters all loved to relate reminiscences of his early youth. His courage, strength of purpose, unflagging industry, joined to such unusual delicacy, marked him as a boy of promise.

His big, strong brothers admired him because he was such a brave little fellow, and his sisters loved him because he was always tender and true.

George W. Fisher was a consecrated man. He was devoted to his work, he loved it, he loved the church, he loved his people. To-day all that remains on earth of your pastor comes back to you. He would have his body sleep not only where his little daughter sleeps, and where he pointed out, when living, the other members of the family should sleep, but he would sleep in the field of his life's work. He was bound to you, as you never could be bound to him; even as a parent is bound to a child, as the child can never be bound to the parent. It is his last will and testament to you—his dust; guard it tenderly. And the shaft which you will ere long erect to his memory will ever be as a guardian angel hovering over this church and this community, proclaiming "peace on earth and good will to men," and saying, "glorify God in my love to you and in your love to me."